

NOTES ON ITALIAN HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

Gramsci planned to organise his notes on Italian history into a study to be entitled "Reformation, Renaissance". Although, in the event, a comparatively small proportion of his historical writing was concerned with the specific historical phenomena normally understood by these designations, nevertheless Gramsci's title does perhaps offer us a starting-point from which to attempt to isolate the basic preoccupations and the basic concepts with which he approached the historical experience of Italy.

Gramsci distinguishes between two quite distinct "Renaissances": "... the Renaissance was a vast movement, which started after the year 1000, and of which Humanism and the Renaissance (in the narrow sense of the word) were two closing moments—moments which were primarily located in Italy, whereas the more general historical process was European and not only Italian. Humanism and the Renaissance, as the literary expression of this European historical movement, were located primarily in Italy; but the progressive movement after the year 1000, although an important part of it took place in Italy with the Communes, precisely in Italy degenerated . . . while in the rest of Europe the general movement culminated in the national states and then in the world expansion of Spain, France, England, Portugal. In Italy what corresponded to the national states of these countries was the organisation of the Papacy as an absolute state . . . which divided the rest of Italy, etc. . . . The Renaissance may be viewed as the cultural expression of an historical process in which there was created in Italy a new intellectual class of European dimensions. This class divided into two branches: one exercised a cosmopolitan function in Italy, linked to the Papacy and reactionary in character; the other was formed outside Italy, from political and religious exiles, and exercised a progressive cosmopolitan function in the various countries where it existed, or participated in the organisation of the modern states as a technical element in the armed forces, in politics, in engineering, etc."

Thus contained in the term "Renaissance" are a number of Gramsci's key concerns: the failure of the Italian Communal bourgeoisie (see note 4 on p. 53) to transcend the "economic-corporate" phase and create a national state; the specific historical

backwardness of Italy which resulted; the regressive "cosmopolitan" characteristics of the traditional Italian intellectuals, linked to the role of the Papacy, etc.

The term "Reformation" is likewise not a simple, or univocal one for Gramsci. In so far as he used it to stress popular participation, which he saw as a characteristic of Lutheranism and Calvinism in contrast to the Renaissance, it may be questioned to what extent this corresponds to historical reality. Gramsci sees Marxism as involving a "reformation": "The philosophy of praxis corresponds to the nexus Protestant Reformation plus French Revolution: it is a philosophy which is also a politics and a politics which is also a philosophy." (See too "Brief Notes on Machiavelli's Politics" on pp. 132-3.) Here we find one of the couples of opposed but dialectically united concepts which run through Gramsci's work, and whose shifting, and by no means always consistent combinations make it so hard to arrive at any definitive interpretation of his thought. Revolution/Reformation here can be related to the other Gramscian couplets State/civil society, force/consent, domination/leadership, war of manoeuvre/war of position, etc. which recur throughout the Prison Notebooks. (See, e.g., p. 170 and note 71 on that page.)

The major focus, in the event, of Gramsci's historical writing was the Risorgimento. He began his analysis by a statement of "the methodological criterion on which our own study must be based . . . that the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership". The Risorgimento, for Gramsci, was characterised by an absence of the second element, and concretely by an absence of an Italian equivalent of the Jacobins. (What Gramsci meant by "Jacobin" will be discussed more fully in the introduction to "The Modern Prince" below. He saw the essence of "Jacobinism" as the subordination of the "countryside" to the "city" in an organic relationship, i.e. the organising of peasant "consent".)

The basic problem confronting Gramsci was that of identifying the specific weaknesses of the Italian national state which emerged from the Risorgimento—weaknesses which culminated in the advent to power of Fascism sixty years later. His analysis was a complex one, whose point of departure was the question of what the Risorgimento *was not*. Mazzini and the Action Party, the potential "Jacobins", did not make any attempt to rouse the peasantry and draw it into the process of national unification; they did not promote any agrarian reform. Consequently, they failed to give the

Risorgimento any popular dimension or themselves any solid class base. (Incidentally, this aspect of Gramsci's historical writing has given rise to a major historical debate in Italy: see Romario Roseo's thesis—developed in *Risorgimento e capitalismo* (1956–58)—that the absence of an agrarian reform in fact played a “progressive” role in relation to the growth of Italian industrial capitalism, and also the debate between Romeo and Gerschenkron in *La formazione dell'Italia industriale* (1963).) The result was that “what was involved was not a social group which ‘led’ other groups, but a State [Piedmont] which, even though it had limitations as a power, ‘led’ the group which should have been ‘leading’”. What was involved was a “passive revolution”.

Gramsci's use of the term “passive revolution” is one of the cruxes of his political thought. The term originated with Vincenzo Cuoco (see note 11 on p. 59), who used it at first to describe the lack of mass participation in the Neapolitan revolution of 1799 and the latter's “external” origins; subsequently Cuoco came to *advocate* such “passive revolutions” as preferable to violent ones involving the popular masses on the French model. (Incidentally, Lenin also uses the term in *The Crisis of Menshevism* (1906), but there is no evidence that Gramsci knew this text.) Gramsci also uses the expression in two distinct ways: firstly, in something close to Cuoco's original sense, as a revolution without mass participation (and due in large part to outside forces)—e.g. the Risorgimento; secondly, as a “molecular” social transformation which takes place as it were beneath the surface of society, in situations where the progressive class cannot advance openly—e.g. the progress of the bourgeoisie in Restoration France after 1815 (“revolution/restoration”: see p. 119), or the development of Christianity within the Roman Empire.

Although Gramsci condemns explicitly any advocacy of “passive revolution” as a programme, his use of the term is often ambiguous. This is especially the case where he tentatively relates it to “war of position”, itself by no means a consistent or univocal concept in Gramsci's writing (see introduction to “State and Civil Society”). On the other hand, Gramsci makes use of the notion of “passive revolution” to confront certain of the central problems of revolutionary analysis and strategy. In the two final passages in this section, in which he comments on Croce's historiography and also on his contemporary role, and again in the section entitled “Americanism and Fordism” below, Gramsci relates the concept of passive revolution to the Italian fascist régime. Viewing the latter as a transitional, compromise form comparable in some ways to the rule

of Napoleon III, he asks a series of questions. What modification in the fundamental balance of social forces is taking place beneath the surface of fascism? How is Croce organising the long-term "consent" to bourgeois rule? What is the significance of the forms of State intervention in the economy which were common to New Deal America and to Fascist Italy? What are the fundamental economic contradictions under Fascism, and how will these be expressed politically? How can the working class develop and retain some degree of class organisation and consciousness even under the corporate State?

Gramsci does not offer clear answers to all these questions. The sense of the analogy he draws between the post-1815 period in Europe and the period in which he is writing (see final sentences of this section) is simply to reaffirm that even when frontal attack may be impossible, a passive revolution may nonetheless be taking place; that the class struggle continues despite the surface stability of the fascist régime. Yet here we approach one of the supreme paradoxes of Gramsci's thought, a dilemma to which he found no answer. For there is precisely a radical dissimilarity between the situation of the bourgeoisie under feudal or pre-bourgeois forms of State and that of the proletariat under bourgeois rule. In the former case, capitalist relations of production can develop within the feudal State, until at a certain point in time the "carapace" cracks. In the latter case, however, this is not so. It is quite impossible for socialist relations of production to develop "within" capitalism. It is unquestionably for this reason that whenever Gramsci touches on this dilemma—which is also the question of how fascism can be overthrown—he tends to pose questions rather than make assertions. Since no fascist régime has yet been overthrown by internal forces, it is to his credit that he refused any easy, or unilateral formula, but contented himself with rejecting the twin, undialectical deviations of frontal attack and "liquidationism". Clearly these problems are closely related too to Gramsci's statement that "A social group can, and indeed must, already 'lead' [i.e. be hegemonic] before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power)." For this, see introduction to "State and Civil Society".

OUTLINE CHRONOLOGY OF ITALIAN HISTORY

- A.D. 476 Final extinction of the Roman Empire in the West, followed by periods of Ostrogoth and Lombard rule in

	what is now Italy—punctuated by attempts to extend Byzantine power, especially in the South.
Eighth Century	Rise of the Papacy as a territorial power; annexation of the Lombard kingdom by Charlemagne.
800	Charlemagne crowned as Holy Roman Emperor.
912	Otto of Saxony crowned Holy Roman Emperor as Otto I. For the next four centuries and more, Italian history was dominated by the struggle for supremacy between the German Emperors and the Papacy. In the South, Sicily was held by the Arabs (827–1072), then the Normans until 1189, when the Hohenstaufen Emperor Henry VI inherited it by marriage.
Twelfth Century	Emergence in North and Central Italy of the “Communes”. The prosperous trading and manufacturing towns which grew up during this period formed self-governing republics which controlled the surrounding <i>contado</i> . The German Emperors saw the emergence of these towns as a threat, and supported the feudal landowners (who were the basis for the Ghibelline party) against them. The Papacy supported the burghers and merchants who constituted the Guelph party. In the internecine struggles between the cities, and within them between the rival parties, the feudal landowning class was effectively wiped out in North and Central Italy by about 1300. It was during the thirteenth century that Italian emerged as a literary language, first in Sicily at the court of Frederick II, and subsequently in Tuscany with Dante (1265–1321).
Thirteenth Century	The mediaeval communes became dominated by their <i>Signorie</i> or councils of notables—and in time, in most cases, by one powerful family dynasty. From 1300 onwards, five states were dominant in Italy: Florence, Milan, Venice, the Papal state, and the Kingdom of Naples (ruled by the dynasty of Anjou). Sicily (which had thrown off Angevin rule itself in 1282: the Angevins had acquired the island by marriage in 1265) from 1302 had Aragonese rulers. In 1347–48, a probable third (up to 60 per cent in certain cities) of the population of Italy died in the Black Death.
Fourteenth Century	
Fifteenth Century	The family dynasties which dominated the city-states of North and Central Italy were mostly legitimised by

- Pope or Emperor: the *Signoria* gave way to the *Principato*. The Renaissance (in the conventional, narrow sense) flowered in Medici Florence, Sforza Milan, Papal Rome, and in a host of smaller cities. Venice remained a republic. In 1442 Alphonse of Aragon succeeded to the Kingdom of Naples (he already ruled Sicily).
- 1494 Two years after the death of Lorenzo de' Medici, Charles VIII of France invaded Italy to claim the crown of Naples. By 1529, Milan and Naples were under Spanish rule. Machiavelli (1469-1527) wrote precisely during this period of foreign invasions and maximum disunity among the Italian states.
- Sixteenth-
Eighteenth
Centuries Italy was largely under foreign domination or outright occupation. Naples (i.e. virtually the whole of mainland Italy South of Rome) was Spanish until 1713, Austrian until 1735, and was ruled by a Spanish Bourbon dynasty until the approach of Napoleon's armies and the proclamation of the Parthenopean Republic in 1798. Milan was Spanish until 1713, Austrian thereafter until the Napoleonic conquest of 1796. Florence lost its independence in 1532 and was merged into the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, which was effectively an Austrian puppet state from 1737. The Papal State remained formally independent, as did the Venetian Republic, until the advent of Napoleon, in 1797-98. Various other small states existed as independent entities in Central Italy during this period: Parma, Genoa, Lucca, Massa-Carrara, Modena, etc. Sicily was ceded by Spain to the Duke of Savoy in 1713; by Savoy to Austria in 1720; in 1738 it was united with Naples under the Spanish Bourbons. Lastly, Savoy emerged as a powerful state in the seventeenth century; in 1713 the Duke of Savoy acquired Sicily, but in 1720 was forced to exchange the latter for Sardinia—whereafter his realm became known as the Kingdom of Sardinia (although its main territory was in fact what is now Piedmont).
- 1796-1815 The Napoleonic invasion and occupation temporarily united Italy, and had a lasting impact on the political and social life of the territory.
- 1815 Congress of Vienna. Austria became the dominant

- power throughout the Italian peninsula; she occupied Lombardy, the Veneto and the statelets of central Italy, and protected the restored Bourbons in Naples, the Papacy, and the Kingdom of Sardinia (Sardinia and Piedmont).
- 1820 Carbonarist risings in Piedmont and Naples were suppressed with Austrian assistance.
- 1830-31 Risings in Modena, Parma, and especially in the Papal states were suppressed by the Austrians.
- 1834 Abortive Mazzinian rising, led by Ramorino, at Genoa against the Savoy monarchy of Sardinia and Piedmont.
- 1848-49 Anti-Austrian risings throughout North and Central Italy. The Piedmont monarchy had by now set its sights on becoming the nucleus and hegemonic force of a united Italy. In March 1848 King Carlo Alberto proclaimed that Italy would "go it alone", and declared war on Austria. In May 1848 the Milanese rose in the "Five Days" insurrection, and drove the Austrians out of the city. A republic was proclaimed once again in Venice, under Manin. In January 1849, a Roman Republic was declared. However, in March 1849 the Piedmontese were defeated by the Austrians at Novara, and in the following months the Austrians re-established total supremacy; Rome fell in June, and Venice in August.
- 1853 Anti-Austrian rising in Milan suppressed.
- 1854 Piedmont, under Cavour's ministry, participated somewhat symbolically in the Crimean War on the French side, as the opening move in a determined diplomatic bid for French support.
- 1858 Alliance signed between France and Piedmont.
- 1859 War between France and Piedmont on the one hand and Austria on the other. After victories at Magenta and Solferino, Piedmont received Lombardy from Austria, and in turn ceded Nice and Savoy to France.
- 1860 The Central Italian states (with the exception of the Papal state) joined Piedmont. Garibaldi's expedition to Sicily finally toppled the Bourbon dynasty of the Two Sicilies.
- 1861 Kingdom of Italy proclaimed, with its capital at Turin, and subsequently (1864) at Florence.

- 1866 Prussia defeated Austria; Italy, as Prussia's ally, received the Veneto.
- 1867 French troops prevented Garibaldi from marching on Rome, defeating him at Mentana.
- 1870 During the Franco-Prussian War, the French troops withdrew and the Piedmontese army occupied Rome, which became the capital of a united Italy. The Pope refused to accept the end of his territorial power or the legitimacy of the new Italian state, and withdrew symbolically into the Vatican.
- 1885 Italian imperialist expansion into Eritrea and Somalia.
- 1912 Italian occupation of Libya.
- 1915 Italy intervened in the First World War on the side of Britain and France; at the end of the war, she was rewarded by the acquisition of Trieste, the Trentino and South Tyrol, at the expense of Austria.

This extremely schematic chronology notably excludes post-Risorgimento, internal Italian politics—which is extensively covered by Gramsci's text, and in the footnotes to it.

NOTES ON ITALIAN HISTORY

HISTORY OF THE SUBALTERN CLASSES: METHODOLOGICAL CRITERIA

The historical unity of the ruling classes is realised in the State, and their history is essentially the history of States and of groups of States. But it would be wrong to think that this unity is simply juridical and political (though such forms of unity do have their importance too, and not in a purely formal sense); the fundamental historical unity, concretely, results from the organic relations between State or political society and "civil society".¹

The subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a "State": their history, therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society, and thereby with the history of States and groups of States. Hence it is necessary to study: 1. the objective formation of the subaltern social groups, by the developments and transformations occurring in the sphere of economic production; their quantitative diffusion and their origins in pre-existing social groups, whose mentality, ideology and aims they conserve for a time; 2. their active or passive affiliation to the dominant political formations, their attempts to influence the programmes of these formations in order to press claims of their own, and the consequences of these attempts in determining processes of decomposition, renovation or neo-formation; 3. the birth of new parties of the dominant groups, intended to conserve the assent of the subaltern groups and to maintain control over them; 4. the formations which the subaltern groups themselves produce, in order to press claims of a limited and partial character; 5. those new formations which assert the autonomy of the subaltern groups, but within the old framework; 6. those formations which assert the integral autonomy, . . . etc.²

The list of these phases can be broken down still further, with intermediate phases and combinations of several phases. The historian must record, and discover the causes of, the line of development towards integral autonomy, starting from the most primitive phases; he must note every manifestation of the Sorelian "spirit of cleavage".³ Therefore, the history of the parties of the subaltern groups is very complex too. It must include all the repercussions of

¹ For Gramsci's use of the term "civil society", see introduction to *State and Civil Society*, pp. 206-9.

² The last three categories refer presumably to trade unions, reformist parties, and communist parties respectively.

³ See note 4 on p. 126.

party activity, throughout the area of the subaltern groups themselves taken globally, and also upon the attitudes of the dominant group; it must include as well the repercussions of the far more effective actions (effective because backed by the State) of the dominant groups upon the subaltern groups and their parties. Among the subaltern groups, one will exercise or tend to exercise a certain hegemony through the mediation of a party; this must be established by studying the development of all the other parties too, in so far as they include elements of the hegemonic group or of the other subaltern groups which undergo such hegemony.

Numerous principles of historical research can be established by examining the innovatory forces which led the national *Risorgimento* in Italy: these forces took power and united in the modern Italian State, in struggle against specific other forces and helped by specific auxiliaries or allies. In order to become a State, they had to subordinate or eliminate the former and win the active or passive assent of the latter. A study of how these innovatory forces developed, from subaltern groups to hegemonic and dominant groups, must therefore seek out and identify the phases through which they acquired: 1. autonomy *vis-à-vis* the enemies they had to defeat, and 2. support from the groups which actively or passively assisted them; for this entire process was historically necessary before they could unite in the form of a State. It is precisely by these two yardsticks that the level of historical and political consciousness which the innovatory forces progressively attained in the various phases can be measured—and not simply by the yardstick of their separation from the formerly dominant forces. Usually the latter is the only criterion adopted, and the result is a unilateral history—or sometimes total incomprehension, as in the case of the history of Italy, since the era of the Communes. The Italian bourgeoisie was incapable of uniting the people around itself, and this was the cause of its defeats and the interruptions in its development.⁴

In the *Risorgimento* too, the same narrow egoism prevented a

⁴ Clearly the fate of the mediaeval communes in Italy i.e. the autonomous city-states and the failure of their bourgeoisies to unite nationally is one of the fundamental problems for Italian historiography, and it recurs throughout the *Prison Notebooks*, though in particularly fragmentary form, e.g. "This book of Barbadoro's [on the finances of the Florentine Commune] is indispensable for seeing precisely how the communal bourgeoisie did not succeed in transcending the economic-corporate phase, i.e. in creating a State 'with the consent of the governed' and capable of developing. The development of the State proved possible only as a principality, not as a communal republic". (*Ris.*, p. 9). "On the fact that the communal bourgeoisie did not succeed in transcending the corporative phase and hence cannot be said to have created a State, since it was

rapid and vigorous revolution like the French one. This is one of the most important problems, one of the most fertile causes of serious difficulties, in writing the history of the subaltern social groups and hence the (past) history *tout court* of the Italian States.

The history of subaltern social groups is necessarily fragmented

rather the Church and the Empire which constituted States, i.e. on the fact that the Communes did not transcend feudalism, it is necessary before writing anything, to read Gioacchino Volpe's book *Il Medioevo*." (Ris., p. 10). "It is necessary to determine what significance the 'State' had in the Communal State: a limited 'corporative' significance, which meant that it was unable to develop beyond middle feudalism, i.e. that which succeeded the absolute feudalism without a third estate, so to speak which had existed before the year A.D. 1000, and which was itself succeeded by the absolute monarchy in the fifteenth century, up to the French Revolution. There was an organic transition from the Commune to a system that was no longer feudal in the Low Countries, and there alone. In Italy, the Communes were unable to go beyond the corporative phase, feudal anarchy triumphed in a form appropriate to the new situation and then came the period of foreign domination." (Ris., p. 18). In a note in which Gramsci sketches out a plan of historical research (*Il Risorgimento e la Storia Precedente*, Ris., p. 3), he devotes a section to "Middle Ages, or epoch of the Communes, in which the new urban social groups are formed in molecular fashion, without the process reaching the higher phase of maturation as in France, Spain, etc.". Despite their fragmentary character, Gramsci's notes on "The Mediaeval Commune as the economic-corporative phase of the modern State" are clearly fundamental to his entire analysis of the specificity of Italian historical development. See also, e.g. "A further criterion of research must be borne in mind, in order to emphasise the dangers inherent in the method of historical analogy as an interpretative criterion. In the ancient and mediaeval State alike, centralisation, whether political-territorial or social (and the one is merely a function of the other), was minimal. The State was, in a certain sense, a mechanical bloc of social groups, often of different race: within the circle of political-military compression, which was only exercised harshly at certain moments, the subaltern groups had a life of their own, institutions of their own, etc., and sometimes these institutions had State functions which made of the State a federation of social groups with disparate functions not subordinated in any way a situation which in periods of crisis highlighted with extreme clarity the phenomenon of 'dual power'. The only group excluded from any organised collective life of its own was that of the slaves (and such proletarians as were not slaves) in the classical world, and is that of the proletarians, the serfs and the peasants in the mediaeval world. However, even though, from many points of view, the slaves of the ancient world and the mediaeval proletariat were in the same conditions, their situation was not identical: the attempted revolt by the Ciompi [in Florence in 1378] certainly did not have the impact that a similar attempt by the slaves of antiquity would have produced (Spartacus demanding to be taken into the government in collaboration with the plebs, etc.). While in the Middle Ages an alliance between proletarians and people, and even more so the support of the proletarians for the dictatorship of a prince, was possible, nothing similar was possible for the slaves of the classical world. The modern State substitutes for the mechanical bloc of social groups their subordination to the active hegemony of the directive and dominant group, hence abolishes certain autonomies, which nevertheless are reborn in other forms, as parties, trade unions, cultural associations. The contemporary dictatorships legally abolish these new forms of autonomy as well, and strive to incorporate them within State activity: the legal centralisation of the entire national life in the hands of the dominant group becomes 'totalitarian'." (Ris., pp. 195-6.)

and episodic. There undoubtedly does exist a tendency to (at least provisional stages of) unification in the historical activity of these groups, but this tendency is continually interrupted by the activity of the ruling groups; it therefore can only be demonstrated when an historical cycle is completed and this cycle culminates in a success. Subaltern groups are always subject to the activity of ruling groups, even when they rebel and rise up: only "permanent" victory breaks their subordination, and that not immediately. In reality, even when they appear triumphant, the subaltern groups are merely anxious to defend themselves (a truth which can be demonstrated by the history of the French Revolution at least up to 1830). Every trace of independent initiative on the part of subaltern groups should therefore be of incalculable value for the integral historian. Consequently, this kind of history can only be dealt with monographically, and each monograph requires an immense quantity of material which is often hard to collect. [1934-35]

THE PROBLEM OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION AND THE MODERN STATE IN ITALY⁵

The whole problem of the connection between the various political currents of the Risorgimento—of their relations with each other,

⁵ There is a real problem in translating the Italian "*dirigere*" and its compounds: *direzione*, *dirigente*, *diretto*, *direttivo*, etc. "*Dirigere*" means to "direct, lead, rule"; when, as here, Gramsci counterposes it to "*dominare*" we translate it "to lead". "*Dirigente*" is the present participle of "*dirigere*"—e.g. "*classe dirigente*" is the standard equivalent of "ruling class"—and as a noun is the normal word for (political) "leader"; where Gramsci uses it, as in this passage, in counter position to "*dominante*" we have translated it as "leading". "*Diretto*" as an adjective means "direct", as a past participle has been translated "led". "*Direttivo*" has been translated "directive", although there is not really any such adjective in English. "*Direzione*" covers the various meanings of the word "direction" in English, but is also the normal word for "leadership", and has usually been translated as such here. It could be argued that a better English version would be achieved, without distorting Gramsci's thought, by regarding "*direzione*" and "*egemonia*" as interchangeable. After all, not only does Gramsci *usually* use them interchangeably; it is also the case that, for example, in the standard English translation of Lenin, e.g. in "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy", the word "hegemony" is used to translate "*rukovodstvo*", which could equally well be translated "leadership", and would certainly normally be translated as "*direzione*" in Italian. However, in view of the importance of these concepts in Gramsci's work, and the variations in his usage of them, we felt it preferable to choose fidelity over good English—despite the awkwardness of "lead" and "leading" in some passages.

Moreover, Gramsci certainly does not *always* use "*egemonia*" interchangeably with "*direzione*"—he sometimes uses it as the equivalent of "*direzione*" plus "*dominazione*", e.g. in the last passage quoted in the preceding note. For Gramsci's more usual use of this important concept, see especially MS. pp. 201-2: "Croces' thought must therefore, at the very least, be appreciated as an instrumental value."

and of their relations with the homogeneous or subordinate social groups existing in the various historical sections (or sectors) of the national territory—can be reduced to the following basic factual

Thus it can be said that he has drawn attention energetically to the importance of cultural and intellectual facts in historical development; to the function of great intellectuals in the organic life of civil society and the State; to the moment of hegemony and consent as a necessary form of the concrete historical bloc. That this is not something 'futile' is proved by the fact that, contemporaneously with Croce, the greatest modern theoretician of the philosophy of praxis [Lenin], on the terrain of political struggle and organisation and with a political terminology, gave new weight in opposition to the various 'economist' tendencies to the front of cultural struggle, and constructed the doctrine of hegemony as a complement to the theory of the State-as-force, and as the present form of the Forty-Eightist doctrine of 'permanent revolution'. For the philosophy of praxis, the conception of ethical-political history, in as much as it is independent of any realistic conception, can be accepted as an 'empirical canon' of historical research, to be kept continually in mind while studying and analysing historical development, if it is desired to arrive at an integral history and not one that is partial and extrinsic (history of economic forces as such, etc.). See too LC. pp. 482-83: "My study on intellectuals is a vast project. . . . Moreover, I extend the notion of intellectual considerably, and do not limit myself to the habitual meaning, which refers only to great intellectuals. This study also leads to certain determinations of the concept of State, which is usually understood as political society (or dictatorship; or coercive apparatus to bring the mass of the people into conformity with the specific type of production and the specific economy at a given moment) and not as an equilibrium between political society and civil society (or hegemony of a social group over the entire national society exercised through the so-called private organisations, like the Church, the trade unions, the schools, etc.); it is precisely in civil society that intellectuals operate especially (Benedetto Croce, for example, is a kind of lay pope and an extremely efficient instrument of hegemony—even if at times he may find himself in disagreement with one government or another, etc.). This conception of the function of intellectuals, I believe, throws light on the reason, or one of the reasons, for the fall of the mediaeval communes, i.e. of the rule of an economic class which did not prove able to create its own category of intellectuals and thus exercise a hegemony as well as a dictatorship. The Italian intellectuals did not have a national-popular character, but one that was cosmopolitan on the model of the Church; it was a matter of indifference to Leonardo whether he sold the designs for the fortifications of Florence to Duke Valentino. The Communes were thus a syndicalist state, which did not succeed in transcending this phase and becoming an integral State as Machiavelli vainly urged; the latter attempted, by reorganising the army, to organise the hegemony of the city over the countryside, and he can therefore be called the first Italian Jacobin (the second was Carlo Cattaneo, but he had too many strange fancies in his head). It thus follows that the Renaissance should be considered a reactionary and repressive movement, in contrast to the development of the Communes, etc." See too NM. p. 160: "Hegemony and Democracy. Of the many meanings of democracy, the most realistic and concrete one in my view can be worked out in relation to the concept of 'hegemony'. In the hegemonic system, there exists democracy between the 'leading' group and the groups which are 'led', in so far as the development of the economy and thus the legislation which expresses such development favour the (molecular) passage from the 'led' groups to the 'leading' group. In the Roman Empire there was an imperial-territorial democracy in the concession of citizenship to the conquered peoples, etc. There could be no democracy under feudalism, because of the constitution of the closed groups [i.e. estates, corporations, etc.] etc."

In an earlier draft of 1920-30, this long note on the Risorgimento was entitled

datum. The Moderates⁶ represented a relatively homogeneous social group, and hence their leadership underwent relatively limited oscillations (in any case, subject to an organically progressive line of development); whereas the so-called Action Party⁷ did not base itself specifically on any historical class, and the oscillations which its leading organs underwent were resolved, in the last analysis, according to the interests of the Moderates. In other words, the Action Party was led historically by the Moderates. The assertion attributed to Victor Emmanuel II that he "had the Action Party in his pocket", or something of the kind, was in practice accurate—not only because of the King's personal contacts with Garibaldi, but because the Action Party was in fact "indirectly" led by Cavour and the King.

The methodological criterion on which our own study must be based is the following: that the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership". A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to "liquidate", or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups. A social group can, and indeed must, already exercise "leadership" before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power); it subsequently becomes dominant when

"Class political leadership before and after attaining governmental power". Two of its key passages then read as follows: "... a class is dominant in two ways, i.e. 'leading' and 'dominant'. It leads the classes which are its allies, and dominates those which are its enemies. Therefore, even before attaining power a class can (and must) 'lead'; when it is in power it becomes dominant, but continues to 'lead' as well . . . there can and must be a 'political hegemony' even before the attainment of governmental power, and one should not count solely on the power and material force which such a position gives in order to exercise political leadership or hegemony."

⁶ The Moderate Party, formally constituted in 1848, had grown out of the neo-Guelph movement (see note 9 on p. 58). Its first document was C. Balbo's *Le speranze d'Italia* (1844), and its ideas inspired the reforms of 1846-47. It stood initially for a confederation of the Italian States, and demanded reforms and written constitutions in each state. It was to some extent eclipsed in 1849, but its influence increased during the ten years from 1849-59, under the leadership of d'Azeglio and Cavour. It abandoned federalism, and was in fact the main instrument, at the level of political institutions, of national unification in 1859-61, and the main beneficiary of the Risorgimento. After Cavour's death in 1861, it became the Right in the Italian parliament, and held power until 1876.

⁷ The *Partito d'Azione* was founded by Mazzini in March 1853, after the defeat of the February rising in Milan and the dissolution of the *Associazione Nazionale Italiana*. It was republican, but its ambiguous aims were symbolised by its motto "*Dio e popolo*" (God and the people). After several years of tenuous existence, it was revitalised by Garibaldi's influence in 1859, and played an important role in the organisation of the Sicilian expedition of the Thousand. After the unification of the country, most of its members joined the parliamentary "Left", a minority the tiny Republican Party.

it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to "lead" as well. The Moderates continued to lead the Action Party even after 1870 and 1876, and so-called "transformism"⁸ was only the parliamentary expression of this action of intellectual, moral and political hegemony. Indeed one might say that the entire State life of Italy from 1848 onwards has been characterised by transformism—in other words by the formation of an ever more extensive ruling class, within the framework established by the Moderates after 1848 and the collapse of the neo-Guelph⁹ and federalist¹⁰ utopias. The formation of this class involved

⁸ *Transformismo*. This term was used from the 1880s onwards to describe the process whereby the so-called "historic" Left and Right parties which emerged from the Risorgimento tended to converge in terms of programme during the years which followed, until there ceased to be any substantive difference between them especially after the "Left" came to power under Depretis in 1876 (see note 23 on p. 227 below) and the latter began to recruit his ministers indiscriminately from both sides of the parliament. The two main parties disintegrated into personal cliques and factions, which characterised Italian parliamentary life until fascism. The emergence of the Socialist Party from the turn of the century onwards did begin a process of polarisation of politics along class lines—a process which was arrested by fascism before the bourgeoisie had created a viable political party of its own (although the Popular Party—see note 14 on p. 62—was an attempt to do this). See too Gramsci's note (Ris. p. 157) entitled *Il trasformismo*: "Transformism as one of the historical forms of what has already been noted about 'revolution-restoration' or 'passive revolution', with respect to the process of formation of a modern State in Italy. Transformism as a 'real historical document' of the real nature of the parties which appeared as extremist in the period of militant activity (*Partito d'Azione*). Two periods of transformism: 1. from 1860 to 1900 'molecular' transformism, i.e. individual political figures formed by the democratic opposition parties are incorporated individually into the conservative-moderate 'political class' (characterised by its aversion to any intervention of the popular masses in state life, to any organic reform which would substitute a 'hegemony' for the crude, dictatorial 'dominance'); 2. from 1900 onwards transformism of entire groups of leftists who pass over to the moderate camp (the first event is the formation of the nationalist party, with ex syndicalist and anarchist groups, which culminates in the Libyan war in the first instance and subsequently in interventionism). Between the two periods one can discern an intermediate phase (1890-1900) in which a mass of intellectuals joins the parties of the Left so-called socialist, but in reality simply democratic." See too note 6 on p. 57.

⁹ Neo-Guelphism was a liberal catholic movement in Italy in the first half of the nineteenth century. The term was coined by its enemies (the Guelphs had been the Papal party in mediaeval and pre-renaissance Italy), but was accepted by its members—who were quite willing to be identified with the pre-renaissance Papacy, which they saw as symbolising Italian unity and independence. Their aim was an Italian federation under the Pope. Prominent neo-Guelphs included Gioberti (see note 36 on p. 399) and Manzoni, the author of *The Betrothed* (see note 73 on p. 375). The movement's ideals were definitively proved illusory when the Risorgimento created a national Italian state under the Piedmont monarchy, and when the Pope refused to come to terms with that state; most of its members in fact then rallied to the monarchy. It can be seen as a precursor of the Popular Party (see note 14 on p. 62) and hence ultimately of the Christian Democrat Party of today.

¹⁰ There were various federalist tendencies in pre-Risorgimento Italy; in

the gradual but continuous absorption, achieved by methods which varied in their effectiveness, of the active elements produced by allied groups—and even of those which came from antagonistic groups and seemed irreconcilably hostile. In this sense political leadership became merely an aspect of the function of domination—in as much as the absorption of the enemies' *élites* means their decapitation, and annihilation often for a very long time. It seems clear from the policies of the Moderates that there can, and indeed must, be hegemonic activity even before the rise to power, and that one should not count only on the material force which power gives in order to exercise an effective leadership. It was precisely the brilliant solution of these problems which made the Risorgimento possible, in the form in which it was achieved (and with its limitations)—as “revolution” without a “revolution”, or as “passive revolution” to use an expression of Cuoco's in a slightly different sense from that which Cuoco intended.¹¹

In what forms, and by what means, did the Moderates succeed in establishing the apparatus (mechanism) of their intellectual, moral and political hegemony? In forms, and by means, which may

opposition to the unitary conception of the future Italian state held on the one hand by Mazzini and Garibaldi, and on the other by Cavour and the Piedmont monarchy. These tendencies ranged from the neo-Guelph federalism of Gioberti and the moderate liberal federalism of Balbo and d'Azeglio (see foregoing notes) to the radical liberal federalism of Cattaneo (see note 112 on p. 112) and the democratic-republican federalism of Ferrari (see note 23 on p. 65).

¹¹ Vincenzo Cuoco (1770–1823) was a Neapolitan conservative thinker of great influence in the early stages of the Risorgimento. He played a minor role in the Parthenopean Republic of 1799 (see note 63 on p. 92) —out of a sense of public duty (he was a life long functionary) rather than out of any particular commitment to its ideals —and was exiled in consequence. In exile he read Burke and De Maistre, and came to the view that revolution must at all costs be avoided, since it was a destroyer of the “traditions” on which civilisation is based. In his “Historical Essay on the Neapolitan Republic of 1799”, he described the episode as a passive revolution, because it was the work of an “enlightened” bourgeois class, “abstract rationalists”, “Jacobins”, imitating French models (and backed by French armies), and involved no mass participation. In the years which followed he came, paradoxically, to argue precisely in favour of such “passive revolutions”, in that his main thesis was the need to put through reforms in order to prevent revolution on the French model. He was an enthusiastic supporter of Napoleonic rule, and became a public official under it (1806 15). He can be seen as the theorist of what Gramsci termed (after Edgar Quinet) “revolution-restoration”. See MS. pp. 184 85: “One should study the way in which the critical formula of Vincenzo Cuoco on the ‘passive revolutions’, which when it was formulated (after the tragic experiment of the Parthenopean Republic of 1799) was meant as a warning, to create a national mood of greater energy and popular revolutionary initiative, was converted in the minds of the neo-Guelphs and Moderates, in their state of social panic, into a positive conception, into a political programme . . . the determination to abdicate and capitulate at the first serious threat of an Italian revolution that would be profoundly popular, i.e. radically national.”

be called "liberal"—in other words through individual, "molecular", "private" enterprise (i.e. not through a party programme worked out and constituted according to a plan, in advance of the practical and organisational action). However, that was "normal" given the structure and the function of the social groups of which the Moderates were the representatives, the leading stratum, the organic intellectuals.¹²

For the Action Party, the problem presented itself differently, and different systems of organisation should have been adopted. The Moderates were intellectuals already naturally "condensed" by the organic nature of their relation to the social groups whose expression they were. (As far as a whole series of them were concerned, there was realised the identity of the represented and the representative; in other words, the Moderates were a real, organic vanguard of the upper classes, to which economically they belonged. They were intellectuals and political organisers, and at the same time company bosses, rich farmers or estate managers, commercial and industrial entrepreneurs, etc.) Given this organic condensation or concentration, the Moderates exercised a powerful attraction "spontaneously", on the whole mass of intellectuals of every degree who existed in the peninsula, in a "diffused", "molecular" state, to provide for the requirements, however rudimentarily satisfied, of education and administration. One may detect here the methodological consistency of a criterion of historico-political research: there does not exist any independent class of intellectuals, but every social group has its own stratum of intellectuals, or tends to form one; however, the intellectuals of the historically (and concretely) progressive class, in the given conditions, exercise such a power of attraction that, in the last analysis, they end up by subjugating the intellectuals of the other social groups; they thereby create a system of solidarity between all the intellectuals, with bonds of a psychological nature (vanity, etc.) and often of a caste character (technico-juridical, corporate, etc.). This phenomenon manifests itself "spontaneously" in the historical periods in which the given social group is really progressive—i.e. really causes the whole society to move forward, not merely satisfying its own existential requirements, but continuously augmenting its cadres for the conquest of ever new spheres of economic and productive activity. As soon as the dominant social group has exhausted its function, the ideological

¹² For the concept of "organic intellectuals", see "The Formation of the Intellectuals" on pp. 5-14 above.

bloc tends to crumble away; then "spontaneity" may be replaced by "constraint" in ever less disguised and indirect forms, culminating in outright police measures and *coups d'état*.

The Action Party not only could not have—given its character—a similar power of attraction, but was itself attracted and influenced: on the one hand, as a result of the atmosphere of intimidation (panic fear of a terror like that of 1793, reinforced by the events in France of 1848–49) which made it hesitate to include in its programme certain popular demands (for instance, agrarian reform); and, on the other, because certain of its leading personalities (Garibaldi) had, even if only desultorily (they wavered), a relationship of personal subordination to the Moderate leaders. For the Action Party to have become an autonomous force and, in the last analysis, for it to have succeeded at the very least in stamping the movement of the Risorgimento with a more markedly popular and democratic character (more than that perhaps it could not have achieved, given the fundamental premisses of the movement itself), it would have had to counterpose to the "empirical" activity of the Moderates (which was empirical only in a manner of speaking, since it corresponded perfectly to the objective) an organic programme of government which would reflect the essential demands of the popular masses, and in the first place of the peasantry. To the "spontaneous" attraction of the Moderates it would have had to counterpose a resistance and a counter-offensive "organised" according to a plan.

As a typical example of spontaneous attraction by the Moderates, one might recall the formation and development of the "liberal-catholic" movement¹³ which scared the Papacy so much—partially succeeding in paralysing its movements; demoralising it; in an initial period pushing it too far to the left (with the liberalising measures of Pius IX); in a subsequent period driving it into a more right-wing position than it need have adopted; and in the last analysis being the cause of its isolation in the peninsula and in Europe. The Papacy has since demonstrated that it has learnt its lesson, and has shown itself capable in more recent times of

¹³ Liberal catholic movements developed in several European countries—France, Belgium, Italy, England, etc. in the early and mid-nineteenth century. In Italy they included notably the neo-Guelphs (see note 9 on p. 58). Their common ideological basis was an acceptance of the main body of bourgeois liberal thought at the time. In Italy, after the blow of the Pope's withdrawal to the Lateran in 1870, liberal catholicism more or less disappeared, but as Gramsci points out it can be seen as a precursor of the "Modernist" movement (see following note).

manœuvring brilliantly. Modernism first, and later Popularism,¹⁴ are movements resembling the liberal-catholic movement of the Risorgimento, due in great part to the power of spontaneous attraction exercised on the one hand by the modern historicism of the secular intellectuals of the upper classes, and on the other by the practical movement of the philosophy of praxis.¹⁵ The Papacy combated Modernism as a tendency aimed at reforming the Church and the Catholic religion, but it encouraged Popularism—i.e. the socio-economic basis of Modernism—and today with Pius XI is making it the pivot of its world policies.

But the Action Party lacked even a concrete programme of government. In essence it was always, more than anything else, an agitational and propagandist body in the service of the Moderates. The disagreements and internal conflicts of the Action Party, and the tremendous hatred which Mazzini aroused among the more valiant men of action (Garibaldi, Felice Orsini,¹⁶ etc.) against himself personally and against his activities, were caused by the lack of any firm political leadership. These internal polemics were for the most part as abstract as Mazzini's preaching, but it is possible to draw useful historical indications from them (it is enough to quote the example of Pisacane's¹⁷ writings, despite the

¹⁴ Modernism was an intellectual movement which developed among catholics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its proclaimed aims were to bring the Church into harmony with the culture and society of the contemporary world—especially with new developments in scientific and sociological thinking. It was condemned by the Papal decree *Lamentabili* and the Encyclical *Pascendi* in 1907. However, via the work notably of Romolo Murri, it was an important ideological ancestor of contemporary Christian Democracy.

The Popular Party was founded by Luigi Sturzo and others in January 1919. Based on social-christian ideas current throughout Europe at the time, it was encouraged initially by the Papacy (as a political movement directed outwards, and not towards reform of the Church itself like Modernism). It grew swiftly—especially in the agricultural areas of North and Central Italy, where it set up "white" unions whose strength among the small peasants often outstripped that of their "red" rivals. After vacillating in its attitude towards fascism between 1921-25 (Sturzo was not prepared to accept Papal pressure for an accommodation), it was suppressed in 1925-26 like the other opposition parties. After the fall of fascism, it re-emerged as the Christian Democrat Party.

¹⁵ i.e. Modernism and Popularism were a result of—and aimed to counteract—the influence of Croce and Gentile on the one hand, and of socialism on the other.

¹⁶ Felice Orsini (1819-58). After participating in the early stages of the Risorgimento as a follower of Mazzini, he broke with the latter in the mid-50s and made an attempt in 1858 to assassinate Napoleon III, for which he was executed.

¹⁷ Carlo Pisacane (1818-57) was a prominent Risorgimento man of action and military theorist, notable for his advocacy of the creation of peasant armies and a "war of national insurrection". Gramsci commended his perception of the need for a "Jacobin" element in the Risorgimento, but said that he should be compared to the Russian Narodniks. Born in Naples, of aristocratic origins, he became a

fact that he committed irreparable political and military errors, such as opposing Garibaldi's military dictatorship in the Roman Republic). The Action Party was steeped in the traditional rhetoric of Italian literature. It confused the cultural unity which existed in the peninsula—confined, however, to a very thin stratum of the population, and polluted by the Vatican's cosmopolitanism—with the political and territorial unity of the great popular masses, who were foreign to that cultural tradition and who, even supposing that they knew of its existence, couldn't care less about it. A comparison may be made between the Jacobins and the Action Party. The Jacobins strove with determination to ensure a bond between town and country, and they succeeded triumphantly. Their defeat as a specific party was due to the fact that at a certain point they came up against the demands of the Paris workers; but in reality they were perpetuated in another form by Napoleon, and today, very wretchedly, by the radical-socialists of Herriot and Daladier.

In French political literature, the necessity of binding the town (Paris) to the countryside had always been vividly felt and expressed. It is enough to recall the series of novels by Eugène Sue,¹⁸ very widely disseminated in Italy too (Fogazzaro in his novel *Piccolo Mondo Antico* shows Franco Maironi receiving clandestinely from Switzerland the successive episodes of the *Mystères du Peuple*; these were in fact burnt at the hands of the public executioner in certain European cities—Vienna, for example). Sue's novels stress with particular insistence the necessity of having a concern for the peasantry, and of binding it to Paris. And Sue was the popular novelist of the Jacobin political tradition, and a "primary source"

military engineer. In 1847 he fled from Naples and joined the Foreign Legion. In 1848 he returned to Italy when fighting broke out in Milan, and arrived in Rome in March 1849 after the proclamation of the republic (see note 90 on p. 102). He became the moving spirit of the city's War Council, and as commander-in-chief organised the city's defences before Mazzini's appointment of General Rosselli (see note 111 on p. 112). After the fall of the republic, he withdrew to Genoa, and published his *Guerra combattuta in Italia negli anni 1848-49*, in which he expressed his disagreements with Garibaldi. He opposed Garibaldi's conception of revolutionary dictatorship as too purely military, and undemocratic since it did not involve the masses. Pisacane committed suicide in 1857 after the failure of a landing at Sapri south of Naples.

¹⁸ Eugène Sue (1804-57) was the author of a series of extremely popular novels of Paris life published by instalments in the 1840s and 1850s, e.g. *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-43), *Le Juif Errant* (1844-45), *Les Sept Péchés Capitaux* (1847-49), *Les Mystères du Peuple* (1849-57). Set in a popular milieu, they contained a mish-mash of vaguely humanitarian and democratic ideas. *Les Mystères de Paris* and its idealistic interpreters were savagely lampooned by Marx in *The Holy Family*.

for Herriot and Daladier¹⁹ from many points of view (Napoleonic legend, anti-clericalism and anti-Jesuitism, petty bourgeois reformism, penal theories, etc.).

It is true that the Action Party was always implicitly anti-French by virtue of its Mazzinian ideology (compare Omodeo's essay on *French Supremacy and Italian Initiative*, in *Critica*, 1929, pp. 223 ff.), but it found in the history of the peninsula a tradition to which it could go back and attach itself. The history of the mediaeval Communes²⁰ is rich in relevant experiences: the nascent bourgeoisie seeks allies among the peasants against the Empire and against the local feudalism. (It is true that the question is complicated by the struggle between bourgeoisie and nobles competing for cheap labour. The bourgeoisie needs an abundant supply of labour, which can only be provided by the rural masses—but the nobles want the peasants tied to the soil: flight of the peasants into the cities where the nobles cannot capture them. In any case, even though the situation is different, there is apparent in the development of Communal civilisation the function of the city as a directive element, of the city which deepens the internal conflicts of the countryside and uses them as a politico-military instrument to strike down feudalism.) But the most classic master of the art of politics for the Italian ruling classes, Machiavelli, had also posed the problem—naturally in the terms and with the preoccupations of his time. In his politico-military writings, the need to subordinate the popular masses organically to the ruling strata, so as to create a national militia capable of eliminating the companies of fortune, was quite well understood.²¹ Carlo Pisacane should perhaps be connected with this theme in Machiavelli; for him, the problem of satisfying popular demands (after having aroused them by means of propaganda) is seen mainly from the military point of view. With regard to Pisacane, certain contradictions in his conception need to be analysed. Pisacane, a Neapolitan nobleman, had succeeded in acquiring a series of politico-military concepts put into circulation by the military experiences of the French Revolution and of Napoleon, and transplanted to Naples during the reigns of

¹⁹ French "Radicals" prominent in the twenties and thirties—both were prime ministers.

²⁰ See note 4 on p. 53.

²¹ For Machiavelli's project for a citizen's militia, see introduction to "The Modern Prince". The companies of fortune were the mercenary armies led by *condottieri* which roved Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and in numerous cases took power in the cities which employed them, and founded dynasties.

Joseph Bonaparte and of Joachim Murat²²—but especially through the direct experience of the Neapolitan officers who had fought with Napoleon.* Pisacane understood that without a democratic policy it is impossible to have national armies with compulsory conscription, but his aversion for Garibaldi's strategy and his mistrust of Garibaldi are inexplicable. He had the same scornful attitude towards Garibaldi that the General Staffs of the *ancien régime* had towards Napoleon.

The other figure who needs to be studied for these problems of the Risorgimento is Giuseppe Ferrari,²³ but not so much for his so-called major works—real hotch-potches of muddle and confusion—as for his occasional pamphlets and letters. Ferrari, however, was to a great extent outside the concrete reality of Italy; he had become too gallicised. Often his judgements appear more acute than they really are, since he applied to Italy French schemas, which represented conditions considerably more advanced than those to be found in Italy. One may say that Ferrari, in relation to Italy, found himself in the position of a “descendant”, and that his wisdom was in a certain sense “hindsight”. The politician, however, must be an effective man of action, working on the present. Ferrari did not see that an intermediary link was missing between the Italian and French situations, and that it was precisely this link which had to be welded fast for it to be possible to pass on to the next. Ferrari was incapable of “translating” what was French into something Italian, and hence his very “acuteness” became an element of confusion, stimulated new sects and little schools, but did not impinge on the real movement.

If one goes deeper into the question, it appears that from many aspects the difference between many members of the Action Party and the Moderates was more one of “temperament” than of an organically political character. The term “Jacobin” has ended up by taking on two meanings: there is the literal meaning, charac-

²² Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, was King of the Two Sicilies from 1806-8; Murat was King from 1808-15.

* In his obituary of Cadorna in *Nuova Antologia*, 1 March 1929, M. Missiroli insists on the importance that this Neapolitan experience and military tradition had, through Pianell for example, in the reorganisation of the Italian army after 1870.

²³ Giuseppe Ferrari (1811-76), philosopher and historian. Living in exile in France from 1838-59, he wrote various works putting forward a democratic-republican federalist point of view. He returned to Italy in 1859, and was active in parliamentary politics until his death, as a more or less isolated radical figure who stood outside the process of transformism which characterised Italian parliamentary life in those years. See pp. 75-6 below.

terised historically, of a particular party in the French Revolution, which conceived of the development of French life in a particular way, with a particular programme, on the basis of particular social forces; and there are also the particular methods of party and government activity which they displayed, characterised by extreme energy, decisiveness and resolution, dependent on a fanatical belief in the virtue of that programme and those methods. In political language the two aspects of Jacobinism were split, and the term "Jacobin" came to be used for a politician who was energetic, resolute and fanatical, because fanatically convinced of the thaumaturgical virtues of his ideas, whatever they might be. This definition stressed the destructive elements derived from hatred of rivals and enemies, more than the constructive one derived from having made the demands of the popular masses one's own; the sectarian element of the clique, of the small group, of unrestrained individualism, more than the national political element. Thus, when one reads that Crispi²⁴ was a Jacobin, it is in this derogatory sense that the assertion should be understood. In his programme, Crispi was a Moderate pure and simple. His most noble Jacobin "obsession" was the politico-territorial unity of the country. This principle was always the compass by which he took his direction, not only in the period of the Risorgimento, in the strict sense, but in the succeeding period as well, when he was a member of the government. A man of strong passions, he hated the Moderates as individuals: he saw in them the latecomers, the heroes of the eleventh hour; people who would have made peace with the old régimes if these had become constitutional; people like the Tuscan Moderates, who clung to the Grand Duke's coat-tails, afraid that he might run away. He had little trust in a unity achieved by non-unitarians. Hence he tied himself to the monarchy, which he realised would be resolutely unitarian for dynastic reasons, and embraced the principle of Piedmontese hegemony with an energy and ardour which the very Piedmontese politicians themselves

²⁴ Francesco Crispi (1818-1901). At first a Sicilian autonomist, he became linked with Mazzini and converted to the aim of a unitary post-Risorgimento Italian state. In 1859 he organised an insurrection in Sicily, and played an important part in Garibaldi's expedition of 1860. After the achievement of national unity, he became a parliamentary deputy of the Left. In 1865 he broke with Mazzini and rallied to the monarchy. He was Minister of the Interior and Prime Minister on various occasions between 1876 and 1896, and was the most consistent advocate of Italian colonial expansion, notably into Ethiopia. In 1893-94 he repressed the Sicilian Fasci (see following note) with extreme savagery. In many ways he can be seen as a precursor of the nationalist and fascist movements of the twentieth century.

could not match. Cavour had warned that the South should not be dealt with by placing it under martial law: Crispi on the contrary at once established martial law and set up military courts in Sicily after the Fasci movement,²⁵ and accused the leaders of the Fasci of plotting with England for the secession of Sicily (pseudo-treaty of Bisacquino).²⁶ He allied himself closely with the Sicilian latifundists, since their fear of the demands of the peasantry made them the stratum most dedicated to unity, at the same time as overall policy was tending to reinforce Northern industrialism by means of the tariff war against France and customs protectionism. He did not hesitate to plunge the South and the Islands into a terrifying commercial crisis, so long as he was able to reinforce the industry which could give the country a real independence, and which would expand the cadres of the dominant social group: this is the policy of manufacturing the manufacturer. The government of the Right from 1861 to 1876 had merely, and timidly, created the general external conditions for economic development—rationalisation of the government apparatus, roads, railways, telegraph—and had restored to health the country's finances, over-burdened by the wars of the Risorgimento. The Left had attempted to remedy the hatred aroused among the people by the Right's unilateral fiscalism, but it had only succeeded in acting as a safety-valve: it had continued the policies of the Right with a left-wing personnel and phraseology. Crispi, on the other hand, gave the new Italian society a real heave forward: he was the true man of the new bourgeoisie. His figure, however, is characterised by a disproportion between deeds and words, between the repressions and their objects, between the instrument and the blow delivered; he handled a rusty culverin as if it were a piece of modern artillery. Crispi's colonial policy too is connected with his obsession with unity, and in it he proved able to understand the political innocence of the Mezzogiorno. The southern peasant wanted land, and Crispi, who did not want to (or could not) give it to him in Italy itself, who had no wish to go in for "economic Jacobinism", conjured up the mirage of

²⁵ *Fasci dei lavoratori* ("workers' leagues"), led by socialists, spread throughout Sicily in 1892-93. They were basically peasant organisations, and their main aim was the break-up of the big estates and distribution of the land. They had considerable success in securing improved contracts between peasants and land-owners in 1893. In 1893-94, under the impact of the economic crisis of that year, the peasantry rose throughout the island, and was repressed with great brutality by Crispi.

²⁶ It was rumoured that contacts had taken place at Bisacquino, near Palermo, between representatives of the Fasci and the English, with a view to detaching Sicily from Italy and establishing it as an independent state.

colonial lands to be exploited. Crispi's imperialism was passionate, oratorical, without any economic or financial basis. Capitalist Europe, rich in resources and arrived at the point at which the rate of profit was beginning to reveal its tendency to fall,²⁷ had a need to widen the area of expansion of its income-bearing investments; thus, after 1890, the great colonial empires were created. But the still immature Italy not only had no capital to export, but had to have recourse to foreign capital for its own pressing needs. Hence there was lacking any real drive behind Italian imperialism, and it was substituted for by the strong popular passions of the peasants, blindly intent on possessing land. It was a question of an exigency of internal politics which had to be resolved, and was—by the side-tracking of its solution to infinity. Hence Crispi's policy was opposed by the (northern) capitalists themselves, who would more willingly have seen employed in Italy the huge sums spent in Africa; but in the South Crispi was popular for having created the "myth" of easy land.

Crispi left a profound stamp upon an enormous number of Sicilian intellectuals (these especially, though he influenced all Italian intellectuals, creating the first cells of a national socialism which was later to develop vertiginously).²⁸ He created that unitarian fanaticism which brought about a permanent atmosphere of suspicion against anything which might have the air of separatism. This, however (understandably), did not prevent the Sicilian latifundists from meeting in Palermo in 1920, and pronouncing a literal ultimatum against the government "of Rome", threatening secession; just as it did not prevent several of these latifundists from continuing to keep Spanish nationality, nor from calling on the Madrid government's diplomatic intervention (case of the Duke of Bivona in 1919) to safeguard their interests, threatened by the agitation of the peasants back from the war. The attitude of the various social groups in the Mezzogiorno from 1919 to 1926 serves to reveal and to emphasise certain weaknesses of the obsessively unitarian approach of Crispi, and to emphasise certain corrections contributed to it by Giolitti. These were very few in reality, since Giolitti essentially kept to the furrow traced by Crispi. For the temperamental Jacobinism of Crispi, Giolitti substituted bureaucratic diligence and continuity; he kept up the "mirage of land" in colonial policy,

²⁷ See *Capital*, Volume III, Section 3, and note 3 on p. 280 below.

²⁸ i.e. the nationalist party, which as Gramsci showed in *Alcuni temi* was effectively founded by ex-socialists and syndicalists (e.g. Corradini, with his concept of the "proletarian nations"), and fascism, which claimed to be a national socialism.

but he also propped up that policy with a "defensive" military outlook, and with the premise that it was necessary to create the conditions of freedom of expansion for the future. The episode of the Sicilian latifundists' ultimatum in 1920 is not isolated, and another interpretation of it could be suggested—from the precedent of the Lombard upper classes, who on certain occasions threatened to "go it alone" and to reconstitute the ancient Duchy of Milan (a temporary policy of blackmail towards the government)—if the authentic interpretation was not to be found in the campaigns run by the *Mattino* from 1919 until the dismissal of the Scarfoglio brothers.²⁹ For it would be too ingenuous to think that these campaigns were entirely suspended in mid-air, in other words not related in some way to currents of public opinion and to states of mind which had remained subterranean, latent, potential as a result of the atmosphere of intimidation created by obsessive unitarianism. The *Mattino* on two occasions defended the following thesis: that the Mezzogiorno joined the Italian State on a contractual basis, the Albertine Statute,³⁰ but that (implicitly) it continues to preserve a real, concrete personality of its own, and has the right to cast off the bonds of the unitary State if the contractual basis is in any way prejudiced, i.e. if the 1848 constitution is modified. This thesis was developed in 1919–20 in the face of a constitutional modification in one direction, and was repeated in 1924–25 against a change in the other direction.³¹ One must keep in mind the importance of the *Mattino's* role in the Mezzogiorno (it was also the newspaper with the widest circulation). The *Mattino* was always pro-Crispi and expansionist, setting the tone for the South's ideology—created by the hunger for land and by the sufferings of emigration, and inclining towards every vague form of settler colonialism. The following points should also be recalled about the *Mattino*: 1. its extremely violent campaign against the North on the occasion of the attempt by the Lombard textile magnates to gain control of certain Southern cotton industries; an attempt which reached the point at which the plant was about to be

²⁹ The brothers Carlo, Paolo and Antonio Scarfoglio inherited *Il Mattino* of Naples from their father, but were ousted by the Bank of Naples in 1928.

³⁰ Carlo Alberto, King of Sardinia (Piedmont), granted a constitution to Piedmont on 4 March 1848. This "Albertine Statute" provided for a parliament, with ministers responsible to it rather than to the King; it was subsequently extended to the other regions which were annexed to form the Kingdom of Italy.

³¹ i.e. in 1919–20 in view of the threat of a socialist revolution, and in 1924–25 in view of the consolidation of fascist power and its progressive replacement of the institutions of bourgeois democracy by its own dictatorial régime.

transported to Lombardy, disguised as scrap metal in order to evade the legislation on industrial zones; an attempt which was precisely foiled by the newspaper, which went so far as to publish a eulogy of the Bourbons and their economic policies (this happened in 1923); 2. the "sorrowful", "nostalgic" commemoration of Maria Sophia³² published in 1925, which provoked a great fuss and scandal.

To be sure, in order to evaluate this attitude of the *Mattino*, certain qualifications have to be taken into account: the adventurous character and the venality of the Scarfogli,* and their political and ideological dilettantism. But it is necessary to insist on the fact that the *Mattino* was the paper with the largest circulation in the Mezzogiorno, and that the Scarfogli were born journalists, in other words possessed that rapid and "sympathetic" intuition of the deepest currents of popular feeling which makes possible the dissemination of the yellow press.

Another element in evaluating the real significance of the obsessedly unitary policies of Crispi is the complex of feelings created in the North with regard to the Mezzogiorno. The poverty of the Mezzogiorno was historically "inexplicable" for the popular masses in the North; they did not understand that unity had not taken place on a basis of equality, but as hegemony of the North

³² Maria Sophia (1841-1925) was the last Bourbon queen of the Two Sicilies. After the fall of Gaeta in 1861, she and her husband Francesco II fled, first to Rome and then after 1870 to exile in Paris and later Munich. She never ceased to plan the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy.

* It should be recalled that Maria Sophia continually sought to intervene in the internal affairs of Italy, through a thirst for vengeance if not with any hope of restoring the kingdom of Naples even spending money for that purpose, as seems to be beyond doubt. *Unità*, in 1914 or 1915, published a sharp attack on Errico Malatesta in which it was asserted that the events of June 1914³³ might have been sponsored and financed by the Austrian General Staff through the medium of Zita di Borbone,³⁴ given the relations of "friendship" seemingly never interrupted between Malatesta and Maria Sophia; in his work *Uomini e cose della vecchia Italia* [Men and things of old Italy], B. Croce refers again to these relations in connection with an attempt to rescue an anarchist who had committed a terrorist attack an attempt which was followed by diplomatic representations to the French government by that of Italy to stop these activities of Maria Sophia's. The anecdotes about Maria Sophia recounted by Signora B., who used to visit the ex-queen in 1919 to paint her portrait, should also be recalled. When all is said and done, Malatesta never replied to these accusations, as he ought to have done, unless (and this is highly doubtful) it is true that he replied in a letter to a clandestine broadsheet, printed in France by S. Schicchi and called *Il Picconiere*.

³³ i.e. the "Red Week" of Ancona, when troops fired on an anti-war demonstration whose culmination was a rally addressed by Malatesta, killing three people and wounding fifteen more. This led to a general strike and demonstrations throughout the country.

³⁴ Zita di Borbone was the last Austro-Hungarian Empress.

over the Mezzogiorno in a territorial version of the town-country relationship—in other words, that the North concretely was an “octopus” which enriched itself at the expense of the South, and that its economic-industrial increment was in direct proportion to the impoverishment of the economy and the agriculture of the South. The ordinary man from Northern Italy thought rather that, if the Mezzogiorno made no progress after having been liberated from the fetters which the Bourbon régime placed in the way of a modern development, this meant that the causes of the poverty were not external, to be sought in objective economic and political conditions, but internal, innate in the population of the South—and this all the more since there was a deeply-rooted belief in the great natural wealth of the terrain. There only remained one explanation—the organic incapacity of the inhabitants, their barbarity, their biological inferiority. These already widespread opinions (Neapolitan “vagabondry”³⁵ is a legend which goes back a long way) were consolidated and actually theorised by the sociologists of positivism (Niceforo, Sergi, Ferri, Orano, etc.),³⁶ acquiring the strength of “scientific truth” in a period of superstition about science. Thus a polemic arose between North and South on the subject of race, and about the superiority or inferiority of North and South (compare N. Colajanni’s books defending the Mezzogiorno in this respect,³⁷ and the whole series of the *Rivista Popolare*). Meanwhile, in the North there persisted the belief that the Mezzogiorno was a “ball and chain” for Italy, the conviction that the modern industrial civilisation of Northern Italy would have made greater progress without this “ball and chain”, etc. The early years of this century then saw the beginnings of a strong Southern reaction on this very subject. In the Sardinian Congress of 1911, held under the presidency of General Rugiu, a calculation was made of how

³⁵ “Lazzaronismo”, from *lazzaroni* or *lazzari*, from the Spanish *lazar* = poor (which in turn derives from the Biblical figure of Lazarus the beggar). From the sixteenth century onwards this word was applied by the Spanish rulers to the urban “mob” of Naples (and thence by extension of other cities). In Naples, this sub-proletariat was strongly monarchist, and in 1799 it rose in the *Sansfedista* rising against the bourgeois Jacobin régime of the Parthenopean Republic. It continued to be the bastion of the Bourbons to the end. The term itself was pejorative, stressing the wretched condition of that sub-proletariat and its supposed laziness and dishonesty, and it is these connotations to which Gramsci is referring here.

³⁶ Alfredo Niceforo, born 1876, was a sociologist and criminologist who wrote numerous studies on poverty, crime, etc., notably in Naples where he held a university post. In *Italiani del Nord e Italiani del Sud* he argued the biological inferiority of Southern Italians. Similar arguments were put forward by Giuseppe Sergi, Enrico Ferri (see note 47 on p. 246) and Paolo Orano.

³⁷ *Gli avvenimenti di Sicilia e le loro accuse*, and *L'Italia nel 1898: tumulti e reazioni*.

many hundreds of millions had been extorted from Sardinia in the first fifty years of the unitary State, to the advantage of the mainland. Then came Salvemini's campaigns³⁸—brought to their culmination in the foundation of *Unità*, but already being waged in *Voce* (see the special number of *Voce* on the *Southern Question*, later published as a pamphlet). In Sardinia an autonomist movement started, under the leadership of Umberto Cau, which also had a daily newspaper: *Il Paese*. In those early years of the century a certain "intellectual bloc"—a "pan-Italian" one—was created; it was led by B. Croce and Giustino Fortunato, and sought to pose the Southern Question as a national problem capable of renovating political and parliamentary life.³⁹ Not simply the influence of Croce and Fortunato, but their contributions, were to be seen in every review of the younger generation which had liberal democratic tendencies and proposed in general to rejuvenate and deprovincialise national life and culture in all fields—in art, in literature, in politics. It was the case with *Voce* and *Unità*, but also with *Patria* from Bologna, *Azione Liberale* from Milan, with the Young Liberal movement led by Giovanni Borelli, etc.⁴⁰ The influence of this bloc increased further when it came to determine the political line of Albertini's *Corriere della Sera*; after the war, thanks to the new situation, it appeared in *La Stampa* too (through Cosmo, Salvatorelli, and also through Ambrosini) and in Giolittism with the inclusion of Croce in the last Giolitti government.* The movement developed to its maxi-

³⁸ For Salvemini and the influence of his "southernism" on the young Gramsci, see Introduction, pp. xx, xxvi vii.

³⁹ Gramsci develops this analysis of the role played by Croce and Fortunato at greater length in *Alcuni temi*, in MS. p. 173, and below (pp. 93–5) in "The city-countryside relationship . . .". Fortunato, a liberal conservative, was one of the most important of the "southernist" writers, and the author notably of *Il Mezzogiorno e lo Stato italiano*, 1911.

⁴⁰ Giovanni Borelli (1869–1932) was the founder of the Young Liberal movement in 1900. Its aim was the re-creation of a "Latin" Mediterranean, and it was in fact monarchist, irredentist and colonialist.

* A tendentious interpretation of this certainly very complex and many sided movement is also offered today by G. Prezolini, despite the fact that he himself was a typical incarnation of it. However, as an authentic document, there is still the first edition of *La Cultura Italiana* (1923) by that same Prezolini—especially in view of its omissions.⁴¹

⁴¹ Giuseppe Prezolini (b. 1882) was at first a mystical nationalist close to Enrico Corradini (see note 28 on p. 68), subsequently a Crocean with syndicalist sympathies. From 1908–14 he edited the influential *La Voce*. When the fascists took power he soon adapted himself to the new situation. The first edition of his *La Cultura Italiana* (published in 1923 but written before the fascists came to power) contained many passages including a relatively complimentary description of the 1919–20 *Ordine Nuovo* which Prezolini omitted in later editions, in order to avoid giving offence to the régime.

num, which was also its point of dissolution. This point was to be identified in the particular stance of Piero Gobetti and in his cultural initiatives.⁴² The polemic carried on by Giovanni Ansaldo (and collaborators of his such as "Calcante" [Calchas], otherwise Francesco Ciccotti) against Guido Dorso is the most expressive document of this destination and outcome⁴³; the comic aspects

⁴² Piero Gobetti (1901-26) founded the fortnightly *Energie Nuove* in 1918, at the age of 17. The son of a Turin grocer, he was at first strongly influenced by Salvemini, but went far beyond the latter's "concretism", i.e. pragmatic liberalism, in his attitude towards the October Revolution, the working-class and Marxism. Although he was explicitly non socialist, he saluted the October Revolution and the work of Lenin and Trotsky as a gigantic liberation of the Russian people. His positions were extremely confused, and yet brought him near to the revolutionary Left in the years immediately after the war. He wrote, for instance (in 1919): "The Marxist experiment in Russia has certainly failed; the old objections of liberal economics are more powerful than ever against all the proponents of statification—Bolshevism is just a further demonstration of this. . . . But . . . the Russian Revolution is not limited to the socialist experiment. The bases of a new State are being laid there. Lenin and Trotsky are not only Bolsheviks, they are men of action who have awoken a people and are creating a new soul for it. . . . The work of Lenin and Trotsky . . . is basically the negation of socialism and an assertion and exaltation of liberalism . . .". He seems to have been particularly influenced by Trotsky's *Terrorism and Communism: a reply to Kautsky*. His confused positions made him the target of polemics in the pages of *Ordine Nuovo*, from both Gramsci and Togliatti, who attacked his idealism. But he was genuinely concerned, unlike Salvemini, with the theoretical problems raised by the rising tide of working-class revolution in that period, and organised debates in the pages of *Energie Nuove* on socialism, with contributions from, e.g., Croce, Einaudi, Mondolfo, Loria. During 1920 he came closer to the *Ordine Nuovo* group, above all under the influence of the factory council movement, and also because he shared their view that the alliance of workers and peasants was the key to what he saw as the "democratic" revolution in Italy. In January 1921, when *Ordine Nuovo* became a daily, he was asked to become its theatre critic, and he also contributed numerous book reviews. In February 1922 he founded a new weekly *La Rivoluzione Liberale*, whose contributors included Amendola, Pareto, Mosca, Missiroli, Fortunato, Einaudi, Dorso, Lelio Basso, Carlo Levi, Malaparte, Salvatorelli to name only a few. He made this weekly above all into an organ of bitter opposition to fascism; Gobetti was explicit in his opposition to any illusion that fascism could be somehow contained within the system, or that it would be tamed by coming to terms with it. In his opposition to fascism, Gobetti came very close to Marxism (see, for instance, his *L'ora di Marx*), and his entire position was based on the idea that only the working class could defeat fascism. His activity, including a publishing house founded in 1923 and a new fortnightly *Baretti* in addition to *La Rivoluzione Liberale*, continued despite constant police harassment until the end of 1925, when he was forbidden to edit or publish anything further. He decided to go into exile, and died almost immediately of bronchitis and heart failure. Gramsci analysed the significance of Gobetti in his *Alcuni temi*.

⁴³ Guido Dorso (see Gramsci's discussion of him in *Alcuni temi*) was the author of *La Rivoluzione Meridionale*, in which he called for the overthrow of the centralised Italian state, and also of the traditional ruling class of the South. Ansaldo and Ciccotti were contributors at this time to Gobetti's *Rivoluzione Liberale* (although Ansaldo later in fact became a fascist, at the time of the Abyssinian campaign), who defended the unity of Italy at any price—raising the bogey of a return of the Bourbons if the unitary link was broken.

which now seem obvious in the gladiatorial and intimidatory attitudes of fanatical unitarianism even help to make it that.*

From this series of observations and analyses of certain elements of Italian history after unity, certain criteria may be drawn for evaluating the position of confrontation between the Moderates and the Action Party, and for investigating the respective political "wisdom" of these two parties and of the various tendencies which contested the political and ideological leadership of the latter of them. It is obvious that, in order to counterpose itself effectively to the Moderates, the Action Party ought to have allied itself with the rural masses, especially those in the South, and ought to have been "Jacobin" not only in external "form", in temperament, but most particularly in socio-economic content. The binding together of the various rural classes, which was accomplished in a reactionary bloc by means of the various legitimist-clerical intellectual strata, could be dissolved, so as to arrive at a new liberal-national formation, only if support was won from two directions: from the peasant masses, by accepting their elementary demands and making these an integral part of the new programme of government; and from the intellectuals of the middle and lower strata, by concentrating them and stressing the themes most capable of interesting them (and the prospect of a new apparatus of government being formed, with the possibilities of employment which it offered, would already have been a formidable element of attraction for them—if that prospect had appeared concrete, because based on the aspirations of the peasantry).

The relation between these two actions was dialectical and reciprocal: the experience of many countries, first and foremost that of France in the period of the great Revolution, has shown that, if the peasants move through "spontaneous" impulses, the intellectuals start to waver; and, reciprocally, if a group of intellectuals situates itself on a new basis of concrete pro-peasant policies, it ends up by drawing with it ever more important elements of the masses.

* That Ansaldo, in 1925–26, should have thought he could make people believe in a return of the Bourbons to Naples, would seem inconceivable without a knowledge of all the antecedents of the question and of the subterranean courses taken by the polemics, with their hidden meanings and allusions enigmatic to the non-initiated. However, it is remarkable that even among certain popular elements, who had read Oriani,⁴⁴ the fear existed at the time that a Bourbon restoration was possible in Naples, and hence a more extensive dissolution of the unitary State link.

⁴⁴ Alfredo Oriani (1852–1909) was a novelist and polemicist whose themes were those of national destiny—as such he was a forerunner of fascism. Gramsci wrote a number of critical notes on him (see LVN. pp. 16–19).

However, one may say that, given the dispersal and the isolation of the rural population and hence the difficulty of welding it into solid organisations, it is best to start the movement from the intellectual groups; however, in general, it is the dialectical relation between the two actions which has to be kept in mind. It may also be said that peasant parties in the strict sense of the word are almost impossible to create. The peasant party generally is achieved only as a strong current of opinion, and not in schematic forms of bureaucratic organisation. However, the existence even of only a skeleton organisation is of immense usefulness, both as a selective mechanism, and for controlling the intellectual groups and preventing caste interests from transporting them imperceptibly onto different ground.

These criteria must be kept in mind when studying the personality of Giuseppe Ferrari, who was the Action Party's unheeded "specialist" on agrarian questions. It is also necessary to study closely Ferrari's attitude towards the agricultural labourers [*bracciantato*], i.e. the landless peasants who live by day-labour. It is on these that he bases a notable part of his ideological positions, for which he is still sought out and read by certain schools of thought (works of Ferrari reprinted by Monanni, with prefatory material by Luigi Fabbri). It must be recognised that the problem of the agricultural labourers is an extremely difficult one, and even today very hard to solve. In general, the following criteria must be borne in mind: the agricultural labourers to this day are for the most part simply peasants without land—(hence were all the more so in the Risorgimento period)—and not the workers of an agricultural industry developed through concentration of capital and the division of labour. Moreover, in the period of the Risorgimento, tied labour [*obbligato*] was considerably more widespread than casual labour [*avventizio*]. Their psychology is therefore, with all due exceptions, the same as that of the farmer and the small-holder.*

The question was posed in acute form not so much in the Mezzo-

* It is worth recalling the polemic between Senators Tanari and Bassini in the *Resto del Carlino* and in *Perseveranza*, which took place towards the end of 1917 and in early 1918, concerning the application of the slogan: "the land to the peasants", launched around that time. Tanari was in favour, Bassini against. Bassini based himself on his experience as a big agricultural industrialist, as a proprietor of agricultural concerns in which the division of labour had progressed so far as to render the land indivisible, because of the disappearance of the self-employed peasant and the emergence of the modern worker.

giorno, where the artisanal character of agricultural labour was too obvious, as in the Po valley where it was more disguised. Even in recent times, however, the existence of an acute problem of the agricultural labourers in the Po valley was partly due to extra-economic causes: 1. over-population, which did not find an outlet in emigration as in the South, and was artificially maintained through the policy of public works; 2. policy of the landowners, who did not wish to consolidate the working population into a single class of agricultural labourers and share-croppers [*mezzadri*]; they alternated sharecropping with leaseholding, utilising this alternation in order to bring about a better selection of privileged sharecroppers who would be their allies: in every congress of landowners from the Po region, there was always a discussion on whether sharecropping or direct tenancy was more advantageous, and it was clear that the choice was made for motives of a socio-political character. During the Risorgimento, the problem of the Po agricultural labourers appeared in the guise of a terrible phenomenon of pauperism. It is seen thus by the economist Tullio Martello in his *History of the International*, written in 1871-72, a work which must be borne in mind since it reflects the political passions and the social preoccupations of the preceding period.

Ferrari's position is moreover weakened by his "federalism"; especially in his case—living in France as he did—this appeared all the more like a reflection of the national and State interests of France. Proudhon should be recalled, with his pamphlets against Italian unity—combated from the declared standpoint of French State interest and of democracy. In reality, the principal tendencies of French politics were bitterly opposed to Italian unity. To this day the monarchists (Bainville and Co.) "reproach" retrospectively the two Napoleons with having created the "nationalitarian" myth, and with having helped to secure its realisation in Germany and Italy, thus lowering the relative stature of France, which "ought" to be surrounded by a swarm of little states of the Switzerland type in order to be "secure".

Now the Moderates after 1848 formed a national bloc under their own hegemony—influencing the two supreme leaders of the Action Party, Mazzini and Garibaldi, in different ways and to a different extent. They did this precisely under the slogan of "independence and unity", without taking any account of the concrete political content of such generic formulae. How successful the Moderates had been in their intention of diverting attention from the kernel to the husk is demonstrated, among so many other examples, by

this expression of Guerrazzi's in a letter to a Sicilian student*: "Whatever we desire—whether it is despotism or republic or anything else—let us not seek division among ourselves; with this guiding principle, the world can collapse and we will still find the way again." In any case, Mazzini's entire activity was concretely devoted to a continuous and permanent preaching of unity.

On the subject of Jacobinism and the Action Party, an element to be highlighted is the following: that the Jacobins won their function of "leading" [*dirigente*] party by a struggle to the death; they literally "imposed" themselves on the French bourgeoisie, leading it into a far more advanced position than the originally strongest bourgeois nuclei would have spontaneously wished to take up, and even far more advanced than that which the historical premisses should have permitted—hence the various forms of backlash and the function of Napoleon I. This feature, characteristic of Jacobinism (but before that, also of Cromwell and the "Roundheads") and hence of the entire French Revolution, which consists in (apparently) forcing the situation, in creating irreversible *faits accomplis*, and in a group of extremely energetic and determined men driving the bourgeois forward with kicks in the backside, may be schematized in the following way. The Third Estate was the least homogeneous; it had a very disparate intellectual élite, and a group which was very advanced economically but politically moderate. Events developed along highly interesting lines. The representatives of the Third Estate initially only posed those questions which interested the actual physical members of the social group, their immediate "corporate" interests (corporate in the traditional sense, of the immediate and narrowly selfish interests of a particular category). The precursors of the Revolution were in fact moderate reformers, who shouted very loud but actually demanded very little. Gradually a new élite was selected out which did not concern itself solely with "corporate" reforms, but tended to conceive of the bourgeoisie as the hegemonic group of all the popular forces. This selection occurred through the action of two factors: the resistance of the old social forces, and the international threat. The old forces did not wish to concede anything, and if they did concede anything they did it with the intention of gaining time and preparing a counter-offensive. The Third Estate would have fallen into these successive "pitfalls" without the

* Published in the *Archivio Storico Siciliano* by Eugenio Di Carlo, correspondence between F. D. Guerrazzi and the notary Francesco Paolo Sardofontana of Riella, reproduced in *Marzocco* on 24 November 1929.

energetic action of the Jacobins, who opposed every "intermediate" halt in the revolutionary process, and sent to the guillotine not only the elements of the old society which was hard a-dying, but also the revolutionaries of yesterday—today become reactionaries. The Jacobins, consequently, were the only party of the revolution in progress, in as much as they not only represented the immediate needs and aspirations of the actual physical individuals who constituted the French bourgeoisie, but they also represented the revolutionary movement as a whole, as an integral historical development. For they represented future needs as well, and, once again, not only the needs of those particular physical individuals, but also of all the national groups which had to be assimilated to the existing fundamental group. It is necessary to insist, against a tendentious and fundamentally anti-historical school of thought, that the Jacobins were realists of the Machiavelli stamp and not abstract dreamers. They were convinced of the absolute truth of their slogans about equality, fraternity and liberty, and, what is more important, the great popular masses whom the Jacobins stirred up and drew into the struggle were also convinced of their truth. The Jacobins' language, their ideology, their methods of action reflected perfectly the exigencies of the epoch, even if "today", in a different situation and after more than a century of cultural evolution, they may appear "abstract" and "frenetic". Naturally they reflected those exigencies according to the French cultural tradition. One proof of this is the analysis of Jacobin language which is to be found in *The Holy Family*.⁴⁵ Another is Hegel's admission,⁴⁶ when he places as parallel and reciprocally translatable the juridico-political language of the Jacobins and the concepts of classical German philosophy—which is recognised today to have the maximum of concreteness and which was the source of modern historicism. The first necessity was to annihilate the enemy forces, or at least to reduce them to impotence in order to make a counter-revolution impossible. The second was to enlarge the cadres of the bourgeoisie as such, and to place the latter at the head of all the national forces; this meant identifying the interests and the requirements common to all the national forces, in order to set these forces in motion and lead them into the struggle, obtaining two results: (a) that of opposing a wider target to the blows of the enemy, i.e. of creating a politico-military

⁴⁵ *The Holy Family*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1956, pp. 160-67, in Chapter VI, Section 3(c).

⁴⁶ e.g. in Section III, part 3 of his Foreword to the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, and in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. See MS. pp. 63-71.

relation favourable to the revolution; (b) that of depriving the enemy of every zone of passivity in which it would be possible to enrol Vendée-type armies.⁴⁷ Without the agrarian policy of the Jacobins, Paris would have had the Vendée at its very doors. The resistance of the Vendée properly speaking is linked to the national question, which had become envenomed among the peoples of Brittany and in general among those alien to the slogan of the "single and indivisible republic" and to the policy of bureaucratic-military centralisation—a slogan and a policy which the Jacobins could not renounce without committing suicide. The Girondins tried to exploit federalism in order to crush Jacobin Paris, but the provincial troops brought to Paris went over to the revolutionaries. Except for certain marginal areas, where the national (and linguistic) differentiation was very great, the agrarian question proved stronger than aspirations to local autonomy. Rural France accepted the hegemony of Paris; in other words, it understood that in order definitively to destroy the old régime it had to make a bloc with the most advanced elements of the Third Estate, and not with the Girondin moderates. If it is true that the Jacobins "forced" its hand, it is also true that this always occurred in the direction of real historical development. For not only did they organise a bourgeois government, i.e. make the bourgeoisie the dominant class—they did more. They created the bourgeois State, made the bourgeoisie into the leading, hegemonic class of the nation, in other words gave the new State a permanent basis and created the compact modern French nation.

That the Jacobins, despite everything, always remained on bourgeois ground is demonstrated by the events which marked their end, as a party cast in too specific and inflexible a mould, and by the death of Robespierre. Maintaining the Le Chapelier law, they were not willing to concede to the workers the right of combination; as a consequence they had to pass the law of the *maximum*.⁴⁸ They thus broke the Paris urban bloc: their assault forces, assembled in the Commune, dispersed in disappointment, and Thermidor gained the upper hand. The Revolution had found its widest class limits.

⁴⁷ From 1793–96 royalist priests and landowners fomented peasant guerrilla warfare against the Republic in the Vendée region in western France.

⁴⁸ The Le Chapelier law of June 1791 was brought in to dissolve the craft guilds which had survived from the *ancien régime*. Although it was in conception a "progressive" bourgeois measure, it was used throughout the first half of the nineteenth century to ban workers' associations.

The law of the *maximum* fixed a ceiling for food prices and for wages, and drove a wedge between the Jacobins and the workers.

The policy of alliances and of permanent revolution had finished by posing new questions which at that time could not be resolved; it had unleashed elemental forces which only a military dictatorship was to succeed in containing.⁴⁹

In the Action Party there was nothing to be found which resembled this Jacobin approach, this inflexible will to become the "leading" [*dirigente*] party. Naturally one has to allow for the differences: in Italy the struggle manifested itself as a struggle

⁴⁹ Gramsci is here referring to what he elsewhere terms the "forty-eightist" slogan of "permanent revolution", since it was first put forward by Marx during the 1848 wave of bourgeois revolutions in the belief that these would lead directly to proletarian revolutions. See notably the 1850 "Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League": "While the democratic petty bourgeoisie wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible, and with the achievement, at most, of the above demands, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power, . . . Their battle cry must be: 'The Revolution in Permanence'."

See too NM. pp. 102-3: "The development of Jacobinism (of content), and of the formula of Permanent Revolution put into practice in the active phase of the French Revolution, found its juridical constitutional 'completion' in the parliamentary régime. The latter, in the period in which 'private' energies in society were most plentiful, realised the permanent hegemony of the urban class over the entire population in the Hegelian form of government with permanently organised consent. (However, this organisation of consent was left to private initiative, and was thus of a moral or ethical character, because it was consent 'voluntarily' given in one way or another.) The 'limit' which the Jacobins had come up against in the Le Chapelier law and in the law of the *maximum* was transcended and pushed progressively back in the course of a whole process, in which propagandistic and practical (economic, political-judicial) activity alternated. The economic base was continually enlarged and reinforced through industrial and commercial development. Those social elements which were most highly endowed with energy and spirit of enterprise rose from the lower classes to the ruling classes. The entire society was in a continuous process of formation and dissolution, followed by more complex formations with richer potentialities. This, broadly speaking, lasted until the epoch of imperialism and culminated in the world war. In this process, attempts at insurrection alternated with pitiless repression, enlargements of political suffrage with restrictions, freedom of association with restriction or annulment of that freedom. . . . The 'normal' exercise of hegemony on the now classical terrain of the parliamentary régime is characterised by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent. Indeed, the attempt is always made to ensure that force will appear to be based on the consent of the majority, expressed by the so called organs of public opinion newspapers and associations which, therefore, in certain situations, are artificially multiplied. Between consent and force stands corruption/fraud (which is characteristic of certain situations when it is hard to exercise the hegemonic function, and when the use of force is too risky). This consists in procuring the demoralisation and paralysis of the antagonist (or antagonists) by buying its leaders -either covertly, or, in cases of imminent danger, openly in order to sow disarray and confusion in his ranks. In the period following the World War, cracks opened up everywhere in the hegemonic apparatus, and the exercise of hegemony became permanently difficult and aleatory."

against old treaties and the existing international order, and against a foreign power—Austria—which represented these and upheld them in Italy, occupying a part of the peninsula and controlling the rest. This problem arose in France too, in a certain sense at least, since at a certain point the internal struggle became a national struggle fought at the frontiers. But this only happened after the whole territory had been won for the revolution, and the Jacobins were able to utilise the external threat as a spur to greater energy internally: they well understood that in order to defeat the external foe they had to crush his allies internally, and they did not hesitate to carry out the September massacres.⁵⁰ In Italy, although a similar connection, both explicit and implicit, did exist between Austria and at least a segment of the intellectuals, the nobles and the landowners, it was not denounced by the Action Party; or at least it was not denounced with the proper energy and in the most practically effective manner, and it did not become a real political issue. It became transformed “curiously” into a question of greater or lesser patriotic dignity, and subsequently gave rise to a trail of acrimonious and sterile polemics which continued even after 1898.*

⁵⁰ Between 2 and 5 September 1792, at the insistence notably of Marat, some 1200 royalist prisoners were massacred. They were accused of having by their treachery brought about the defeats suffered by the revolutionary armies prior to the battle of Valmy.

* See the articles of Rerum Scriptor in *Critica Sociale* after the resumption of publication, and the book by Romualdo Bonfadini, *Mezzo secolo di patriottismo* [“Half a century of patriotism”], Milan 1886. The question of the “testimony”⁵¹ of Federico Confalonieri should be recalled in this respect: Bonfadini, in the above-mentioned book, asserts in a note that he has seen the collection of the “testimony” in the State Archives of Milan, and he refers to some 80 dossiers. Others have always denied that this collection of testimony exists in Italy, thus explaining its non-publication. In an article (published in 1925) by Senator Salata, charged with carrying out research in the Viennese archives on documents concerning Italy, it was claimed that the testimony had been traced and would be published. Recall the fact that at a certain time *Civiltà Cattolica* challenged the liberals to publish it, asserting that if it was known it would blow sky high, no less, the unity of the State. In the Confalonieri question, the most remarkable fact is that unlike other patriots pardoned by Austria, Confalonieri, who had been a remarkable politician, withdrew from active life and after his liberation maintained a very reserved bearing. The whole Confalonieri question should be critically re-examined, together with the attitude assumed by him and his companions, and an analysis in depth made of the memoirs written by the individuals involved (when they wrote any). For the polemics which they provoked, the memoirs of the Frenchman Alexandre Andryane are interesting; he treats Confalonieri with great respect and admiration, whereas he attacks Giorgio Pallavicino for his weakness.

⁵¹ “*Costituti*” are more precisely statements made under pre-trial interrogation; the word has no exact English equivalent.

Federico Confalonieri (1785–1846) was a conspirator, inventor and journalist. He was a member of the “*Italiani*” in opposition to Napoleon in 1814, and subse-

In connection with the attempts—some even recent—to defend the attitude towards Austria assumed by the Lombard aristocracy, especially after the attempted insurrection at Milan in February 1853 and during the vice-regency of Maximilian,⁵² it should be recalled that Alessandro Luzio, whose historical work is always tendentious and acrimonious against the democrats, goes so far as to justify the faithful services rendered to Austria by Salvotti: hardly a Jacobin spirit! The comic note in the discussion is provided by Alfredo Panzini, who, in his *Life of Cavour*, rings all the changes—as affected as they are nauseating and Jesuitical—on a “tiger-skin” displayed from an aristocrat’s window during a visit to Milan by Franz Josef!⁵³

The conceptions of Missiroli, Gobetti, Dorso, etc., on the Italian Risorgimento as a “royal conquest”, should be considered from all these points of view.

If in Italy a Jacobin party was not formed, the reasons are to be sought in the economic field, that is to say in the relative weakness of the Italian bourgeoisie and in the different historical climate in Europe after 1815. The limit reached by the Jacobins, in their policy of forced reawakening of French popular energies to be allied with the bourgeoisie, with the Le Chapelier law and that of the *maximum*, appeared in 1848 as a “spectre” which was already threatening—and this was skilfully exploited by Austria, by the old governments and even by Cavour (quite apart from the Pope). The bourgeoisie could not (perhaps) extend its hegemony further over the great popular strata—which it did succeed in embracing in France—(could not for subjective rather than objective reasons); but action directed at the peasantry was certainly always possible. Differences between France, Germany and Italy in the process by which the bourgeoisie took power (and England). It was in France that the process was richest in developments, and in active and

quently of the anti-Austrian “*federati*” with wide contacts in French liberal circles. He tried to introduce gas-lighting and river steamboats during this period. In 1821 he plotted a rising in Lombardy to coincide with the Piedmont rising of that year. He was arrested, and his interrogation and trial lasted until 1823, when he was sentenced to death—though this was commuted to life imprisonment, and later to exile.

⁵² Arch-duke Maximilian of Austria was vice-regent of Lombardy from 1857 to 1859. The attempted anti-Austrian insurrection of 6 February 1853, involving workers and artisans inspired by Mazzini’s ideas, was a failure; the aristocrats did not back it.

⁵³ Panzini contrasts Cavour’s refusal to pay any official respects to the Austrian Emperor when he visited his Italian possessions in 1857 with the attitude of the Lombard aristocracy who paid him homage—including one lady who decorated her balcony with a tiger-skin in his honour.

positive political elements. In Germany, it evolved in ways which in certain aspects resembled what happened in Italy, and in others what happened in England. In Germany, the movement of 1848 failed as a result of the scanty bourgeois concentration (the Jacobin-type slogan was furnished by the democratic Far Left: "permanent revolution"), and because the question of renewal of the State was intertwined with the national question. The wars of 1864, 1866 and 1870⁵⁴ resolved both the national question and, in an intermediate form, the class question: the bourgeoisie obtained economic-industrial power, but the old feudal classes remained as the governing stratum of the political State, with wide corporate privileges in the army, the administration and on the land. Yet at least, if these old classes kept so much importance in Germany and enjoyed so many privileges, they exercised a national function, became the "intellectuals" of the bourgeoisie, with a particular temperament conferred by their caste origin and by tradition. In England, where the bourgeois revolution took place before that in France, we have a similar phenomenon to the German one of fusion between the old and the new—this notwithstanding the extreme energy of the English "Jacobins", i.e. Cromwell's "roundheads". The old aristocracy remained as a governing stratum, with certain privileges, and it too became the intellectual stratum of the English bourgeoisie (it should be added that the English aristocracy has an open structure, and continually renews itself with elements coming from the intellectuals and the bourgeoisie).^{*} The explanation given by Antonio Labriola of the fact that the Junkers and Kaiserism continued in power in Germany, despite the great capitalist development, adumbrates the correct explanation: the class relations created by industrial development, with the limits of bourgeois hegemony reached and the position of the progressive classes reversed, have induced the bourgeoisie not to struggle with all its strength against the old régime, but to allow a part of the latter's façade to subsist, behind which it can disguise its own real domination.

⁵⁴ With Denmark, Austria and France respectively.

^{*} Certain observations contained in the preface to the English translation of *Utopia and Science* should be looked at in this connection. These are worth recalling for the research into intellectuals and their historico-social functions.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ The reference is to Engels' *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*. The major part of the new preface to the English edition of 1892 is relevant to Gramsci's problematic here. See Marx/Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 105-15, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1958. See too "Merits of the Ruling Class" on pp. 269-270, and note 6 on p. 216.

These variations in the actual process whereby the same historical development manifests itself in different countries have to be related not only to the differing combinations of internal relations within the different nations, but also to the differing international relations (international relations are usually underestimated in this kind of research). The Jacobin spirit, audacious, dauntless, is certainly related to the hegemony exercised for so long by France in Europe, as well as to the existence of an urban centre like Paris and to the centralisation attained in France thanks to the absolute monarchy. The Napoleonic wars on the other hand, intellectually so fertile for the renovation of Europe, nonetheless through their enormous destruction of manpower—and these were men taken from among the boldest and most enterprising—weakened not only the militant political energy of France but that of other nations as well.

International relations were certainly very important in determining the line of development of the Italian Risorgimento, but they were exaggerated by the Moderate Party, and by Cavour for party reasons. Cavour's case is noteworthy in this connection. Before the Quarto⁵⁶ expedition and the crossing of the Straits, he feared Garibaldi's initiative like the devil, because of the international complications which it might create. He was then himself impelled by the enthusiasm created by the Thousand in European opinion to the point where he saw as feasible an immediate new war against Austria. There existed in Cavour a certain professional diplomat's distortion, which led him to see "too many" difficulties, and induced him into "conspiratorial" exaggerations, and into prodigies (which to a considerable extent were simply tightrope-walking) of subtlety and intrigue. In any case Cavour acted eminently as a party man. Whether in fact his party represented the deepest and most durable national interests, even if only in the sense of the widest extension which could be given to the community of interests between the bourgeoisie and the popular masses, is another question.*

In examining the political and military leadership imposed on the national movement before and after 1848, it is necessary to make

⁵⁶ It was at Quarto, near Genoa, that Garibaldi lived prior to the Sicilian expedition, and from there that the expedition set sail.

* With respect to the "Jacobin" slogan [permanent revolution] formulated in 1848-49, its complex fortunes are worth studying. Taken up again, systematised, developed, intellectualised by the Parvus-Bronstein [Trotsky] group, it proved inert and ineffective in 1905, and subsequently. It had become an abstract thing, belonging in the scientist's cabinet. The [Bolshevik] tendency which opposed it in this literary form, and indeed did not use it "on purpose", applied it in fact in

certain preliminary observations of method and terminology. By military leadership should be understood not only military leadership in the strict, technical sense, i.e. with reference to the strategy and the tactics of the Piedmontese army, or of Garibaldi's troops or of the various militias improvised in the course of local insurrections (Five Days of Milan, defence of Venice, defence of the Roman Republic, Palermo insurrection of 1848, etc.). It should be understood rather in a far wider sense, and one which is more closely connected with political leadership properly speaking. The essential problem which had to be faced from the military point of view was that of expelling from the peninsula a foreign power, Austria, which had at its disposal one of the largest armies in Europe at that time, and whose supporters in the peninsula itself, moreover, even in Piedmont, were neither few nor weak. Consequently, the military problem was the following: how to succeed in mobilising an insurrectional force which was capable not only of expelling the Austrian army from the peninsula, but of preventing it from being able to come back with a counter-offensive—given the fact that the violent expulsion would endanger the complex structure of the Empire, and hence would galvanise all the forces interested in its cohesion for a reconquest.

Numerous abstract solutions to the problem were presented, all of them contradictory and ineffective. "Italy will go it alone" was the Piedmontese slogan of 1848, but it meant catastrophic defeat. The uncertain, ambiguous, timid and at the same time foolhardy policies of the right-wing Piedmontese parties was the principal reason for the defeat. They were capable only of petty cunning. They were the cause of the withdrawal of the armies of the other Italian States, those of Naples and of Rome, when they showed too early that they wanted Piedmontese expansion and not an Italian confederation. They did not favour, but opposed the volunteer movement. They, in short, wanted the only military victors to be the Piedmontese generals, incapable of commanding in so difficult a war. The absence of a popular policy was disastrous. The Lombard and Venetian peasants enrolled by Austria were one of the most effective instruments for suffocating the Vienna revolution, and

a form which adhered to actual, concrete, living history, adapted to the time and the place; as something that sprang from all the pores of the particular society which had to be transformed; as the alliance of two social groups [i.e. proletariat and peasantry] with the hegemony of the urban group. In one case, you had the Jacobin temperament without an adequate political content; in the second, a Jacobin temperament and content derived from the new historical relations, and not from a literary and intellectualistic label.

hence also that of Italy. For the peasants the movement in Lombardy-Veneto, like the Viennese movement, was an affair of gentlemen and of students. Whereas the Italian national parties ought to have, by their policies, brought about or assisted the dissolution of the Austrian Empire, in fact by their inertia they saw to it that the Italian regiments were one of the best supports for Austrian reaction. In the struggle between Piedmont and Austria, the strategic objective could not be that of destroying the Austrian army and occupying the enemy's territory, for this would have been an unattainable and utopian objective. But it could have been that of dissolving Austria's internal cohesion, and of assisting the liberals to gain power firmly and change the political structure of the Empire into a federalist one, or at least to create within it a prolonged state of internal struggles which would give a breathing-space to the Italian national forces, and permit them to regroup themselves politically and militarily.*

Having started the war with the slogan "Italy will go it alone", after the defeat, when the entire undertaking was endangered, an attempt was made to gain French assistance. This occurred precisely at the time when, partly as a result of the reinforcement of Austria, the reactionaries had come to power in France—the enemies of a unitary and strong Italian State, and also of Piedmontese expansion.⁵⁸ France did not wish to give Piedmont even an experienced general, and the latter had to turn to the Pole Chrzanowski.

Military leadership was a larger question than the leadership of

* The same error was committed by Sonnino during the World War, and that in the face of Cadorna's protests. Sonnino did not desire the destruction of the Habsburg Empire, and refused any nationalities policy.⁵⁷ Even after Caporetto, a nationalitarian policy was adopted reluctantly and in a Malthusian manner, and therefore did not give the swifter results which it could have given.

⁵⁷ i.e., any support for the right of self-determination which might have allowed Italy to forge alliances with the various disaffected ethnic minorities within the Habsburg Empire. Giorgio Sonnino (1847–1924) was a conservative politician, prime minister in 1906 and again in 1909, and foreign minister during the First World War (1915–18). For Cadorna, see note 29 on p. 145.

⁵⁸ The Piedmontese under Chrzanowski were defeated by the Austrians at Novara in March 1849. As Marx expressed it in *The Class Struggles in France*: "Piedmont was beaten, Charles-Albert had abdicated and the Austrian army knocked at the gates of France." Marx goes on to describe how the French expedition in Italy, instead of following its proclaimed aim of support for the Italians against Austria, in fact intervened against the Roman Republic. On 11 May the National Assembly rejected a bill of impeachment against Bonaparte and his ministers, and as Marx put it: "the Constituent Assembly . . . admits . . . on 11 May that the bombastically proclaimed passive alliance of the French republic with the struggling peoples means its active alliance with the European counter-revolution".

the army and the working out of the strategic plan which the army was to execute. It included also the politico-insurrectional mobilisation of popular forces who would rise in revolt at the enemy's back and obstruct his movements and logistic services; and the creation of mass auxiliary and reserve forces from which new regiments could be drawn, and which would give to the "technical" army an atmosphere of enthusiasm and ardour.

The policy of popular mobilisation was not carried out even after 1849; indeed stupid quibbles were made about the events of 1849 in order to intimidate the democratic tendencies. The right-wing national policy became involved, during the second period of the Risorgimento, in a search for the assistance of Bonapartist France, and balanced the strength of Austria with the French alliance. The policies of the Right in 1848 delayed the unification of the peninsula by more than two decades.

The uncertainties of political and military leadership, the continual oscillations between despotism and constitutionalism, had their disastrous repercussions within the Piedmontese army too. It may safely be asserted that the more numerous an army is—whether in an absolute sense as a recruited mass, or in a relative sense as a proportion of recruited men to the total population—the more the importance of political leadership increases in comparison with merely technical-military leadership. The combativity of the Piedmontese army was extremely high at the start of the campaign of 1848: the rightists believed that this combativity was an expression of a purely abstract military and dynastic spirit, and began to intrigue to restrain popular freedoms and to tone down expectations of a democratic future. The "morale" of the army fell. Herein lies the entire debate about "fatal Novara". At Novara the army did not want to fight, and therefore was defeated. The "rightists" accused the democrats of having introduced politics into the army and split it: an inept accusation, since constitutionalism precisely "nationalised" the army, made it into an element of general politics, and thereby strengthened it militarily. The accusation is all the more inept in that the army perceives a political change of leadership [*or* direction], without any need for "splitters", from a host of little changes—each one of which might seem insignificant and negligible, but which together form a new, asphyxiating atmosphere. Those who are responsible for the splits are consequently those who have altered the political leadership, without foreseeing the military consequences; those who, in other words, have substituted a bad policy for the previous good one—good,

because in conformity with its objective. The army is also an "instrument" for a particular end, but it is made up of thinking men and not of robots who can be utilised to the limits of their mechanical and physical cohesion. Even if one can and must, in this case too, speak in terms of what is expedient and appropriate to the objective, it is nevertheless also necessary to add the qualification: in accordance with the nature of the given instrument. If you hit a nail with a wooden mallet with the same strength with which you would hit it with a steel hammer, the nail will go into the mallet instead of into the wall. Correct political leadership is necessary even with an army of professional mercenaries (even in the companies of fortune there was a minimum of political leadership, apart from of a technical-military kind); it is all the more necessary with a national, conscript army. The question becomes even more complex and difficult in wars of position,⁵⁹ fought by huge masses who are only able to endure the immense muscular, nervous and psychic strain with the aid of great reserves of moral strength. Only a very skilful political leadership, capable of taking into account the deepest aspirations and feelings of those human masses, can prevent disintegration and defeat.

Military leadership must always be subordinate to political leadership, or in other words the strategic plan must be the military expression of a particular general policy. Naturally, it may be that in a given situation the politicians are inept, while in the army there are leaders who combine military ability with political ability: it was the case with Caesar and with Napoleon. But we have seen how in Napoleon's case the change of policies, combined with the presumption that he had a military instrument which was military in the abstract, brought about his downfall. Even in those cases in which political and military leadership is united in the same person, it is the political moment which must prevail over the military. Caesar's *Commentaries* are a classical example of the exhibition of an intelligent combination of political art and military art: the soldiers saw in Caesar not only a great military leader but especially their political leader, the leader of democracy. It should be recalled how Bismarck, following Clausewitz, maintained the supremacy of the political moment over the military; whereas Wilhelm II, as Ludwig records, scribbled furious notes on a newspaper in which Bismarck's opinion was quoted. Thus the Germans won almost all the battles brilliantly, but lost the war.

⁵⁹ See "Political struggle and military war" on pp. 229-39 below, and introduction to "State and Civil Society" pp. 206-9.

There exists a certain tendency to overestimate the contribution of the popular classes to the Risorgimento, stressing especially the phenomenon of volunteers. The most serious and thoughtful things on the subject were written by Ettore Rota in *Nuova Rivista Storica*, in 1928-29. Apart from the observation made in another note⁶⁰ about the significance which should be accorded to the volunteers, it should be pointed out that the writings of Rota themselves show how the volunteers were viewed with disfavour and sabotaged by the Piedmontese authorities—which precisely confirms their bad politico-military leadership. The Piedmontese government could forcibly enrol soldiers within its own territory in proportion to its population, just as Austria could in its territory and in proportion to an enormously larger population. An all-out war on these terms would always have been disastrous for Piedmont after a certain time. Given the principle that “Italy goes it alone”, it was necessary either to accept immediately a confederation with the other Italian States, or to propose territorial unity on such a radically popular basis that the masses would have been induced to rise up against the other governments, and would have constituted volunteer armies who would have hastened to the support of the Piedmontese. But precisely here lay the problem. The right-wing tendencies in Piedmont either did not want auxiliaries, thinking that they could defeat the Austrians with the regular Piedmontese forces alone (and it is incomprehensible how they could have had such presumption), or else would have liked to have been helped for nothing (and here too it is incomprehensible how serious politicians could have asked such an absurdity). In real life, one cannot ask for enthusiasm, spirit of sacrifice, etc. without giving anything in return, even from the subjects of one’s own country; all the less can one ask these things of citizens from outside that country, on the basis of a generic and abstract programme and a blind faith in a far-distant government. This was the drama of 1848 and 1849, but it is certainly not fair therefore to despise the Italian people; the responsibility for the disaster should be attributed either to the Moderates or to the Action Party—in other words, in the last analysis, to the immaturity and the scanty effectiveness of the ruling classes.

These observations concerning the deficiencies of political and military leadership in the Risorgimento might be met with a very trivial and threadbare argument: “those men were not demagogues, they did not go in for demagoguery”. Another very widespread

⁶⁰ See “Voluntarism and social masses” on pp. 202-5 below.

triviality used to parry negative judgements on the strategic abilities of the leaders of the national movement consists in repeating in various ways and forms that the national movement's capacity to act was due to the *merit* of the educated classes *solely*. Where the merit lies is hard to see. The merit of an educated class, because it is its historical function, is to lead the popular masses and develop their progressive elements. If the educated class has not been capable of fulfilling its function, one should speak not of merit but of demerit—in other words, of immaturity and intrinsic weakness. Similarly, it is necessary to be clear about the term, and the concept, of demagogy. Those men in effect were not capable of leading the people, were not capable of arousing their enthusiasm and their passion, if one is to take *demagogy* in its original meaning. Did they at least attain the end which they set themselves? They said that they were aiming at the creation of a modern State in Italy, and they in fact produced a bastard. They aimed at stimulating the formation of an extensive and energetic ruling class, and they did not succeed; at integrating the people into the framework of the new State, and they did not succeed. The paltry political life from 1870 to 1900, the fundamental and endemic rebelliousness of the Italian popular classes, the narrow and stunted existence of a sceptical and cowardly ruling stratum, these are all the consequences of that failure. A consequence of it too is the international position of the new State, lacking effective autonomy because sapped internally by the Papacy and by the sullen passivity of the great mass of the people. In reality, furthermore, the rightists of the Risorgimento were great demagogues. They made the people-nation into an instrument, into an object, they degraded it. And therein lies the greatest and most contemptible demagogy, precisely in the sense which the term has assumed on the lips of the right-wing parties when they polemicise against those of the left—although it has always been the right-wing parties who have shown the worst demagogy, and who have often (like Napoleon III in France) appealed to the dregs of society. [1934: 1st version 1929-30.]

THE CITY-COUNTRYSIDE RELATIONSHIP DURING THE RISORGIMENTO AND IN THE NATIONAL STRUCTURE

The relations between urban population and rural population are not of a single, schematic type—especially in Italy. It is therefore necessary to establish what is meant by “urban” and “rural” in modern civilisation, and what combinations may result from the

fact that antiquated and retrograde forms continue to exist in the general composition of the population, studied from the viewpoint of its greater or lesser density. Sometimes the paradox occurs that a rural type is more progressive than a self-styled urban type.

An "industrial" city is always more progressive than the countryside which depends organically upon it. But not all Italy's cities are "industrial", and even fewer are typically industrial. Are the "hundred" Italian cities industrial?⁶¹ Does the agglomeration of the population in non-rural centres, which is almost twice as great as in France, demonstrate that Italy's industrialisation is double that of France? Urbanism in Italy is not purely, nor "especially", a phenomenon of capitalistic development or of that of big industry. Naples, which for a long time was the biggest Italian city and which continues to be one of the biggest, is not an industrial city: neither is Rome—at present the largest Italian city. Yet in these mediaeval-type cities too, there exist strong nuclei of populations of a modern urban type; but what is their relative position? They are submerged, oppressed, crushed by the other part, which is not of a modern type, and constitutes the great majority. Paradox of the "cities of silence".⁶²

In this type of city there exists, among all social groups, an urban ideological unity against the countryside, a unity which even the most modern nuclei in terms of civil function do not escape (and there are such nuclei). There is hatred and scorn for the "peasant", an implicit common front against the demands of the countryside—which, if realised, would make impossible the existence of this type of city. Reciprocally, there exists an aversion—which, if "generic", is not thereby any less tenacious or passionate—of the country for the city, for the whole city and all the groups which make it up. This general relationship is in reality very complex, and appears in forms which on the surface seem contradictory; it had a primary importance in the course of the struggles for the Risorgimento, when it was even more absolute and operative than it is today.

⁶¹ Gramsci defines the "hundred cities" (on PP. p. 98) as "the agglomeration into burgs (cities) of the rural bourgeoisie, and the agglomeration into peasant villages [*borgate*] of great masses of agricultural labourers and landless peasants in areas where extensive *latifundia* exist (Puglie, Sicily)".

⁶² D'Annunzio gave the title "Cities of Silence" to a sequence of poems, mainly sonnets, in *Elettra*, the second book of his *Laudi*. These cities—Ferrara, Pisa, Ravenna, Rimini, Assisi, Spoleto, Gubbio, Urbino, Padova, Lucca, Pistoia, Prato, Perugia, Spello, Montefalco, Narni, Todi, Orvieto, Arezzo, Cortona, Bergamo, Carrara, Volterra, Vicenza, Brescia—all had glorious pasts but are now of secondary importance, some little more than villages with magnificent monumental centres as a relic of their bygone splendour.

The first blatant example of these apparent contradictions can be studied in the episode of the Parthenopean Republic of 1799.⁶³ The city was crushed by the countryside—organised into the gangs of Cardinal Ruffo—for a dual reason. On the one hand the Republic, both in its first aristocratic phase and in its subsequent bourgeois phase, totally neglected the countryside. On the other, by holding out the possibility of a Jacobin upheaval in which landed property, which spent its agrarian income in Naples, would be dispossessed, thus depriving the great mass of the people of their sources of income and livelihood, it left the Neapolitan populace indifferent if not hostile. During the Risorgimento, moreover, there already appeared, embryonically, the historical relationship between North and South, similar to that between a great city and a great rural area. As this relationship was, in fact, not the normal organic one between a province and an industrial capital, but emerged between two vast territories of very different civil and cultural tradition, the features and the elements of a conflict of nationalities were accentuated. What was particularly notable during the period of the Risorgimento was the fact that, in the political crises, it was the South which initiated the action: 1799 Naples, 1820–21 Palermo, 1847 Messina and Sicily, 1847–48 Sicily and Naples. Another notable fact was the particular character which each of these movements assumed in Central Italy, like a middle way between North and South; the period of popular (or relatively popular) initiative lasted from 1815 until 1849, and culminated in Tuscany and the Papal States (Romagna and Lunigiana must always be considered as belonging to the Centre). These peculiarities reoccurred subsequently as well: the events of June 1814 culminated in certain regions of the Centre (Romagna and Marche); the crisis which began in Sicily in 1893, and spread into the Mezzogiorno and Lunigiana, culminated in 1898 at Milan; in 1919 there

⁶³ The Parthenopean Republic was proclaimed at Naples in January 1799, as Napoleon's troops approached. The work of an enlightened, "Jacobin" bourgeoisie, a large section of the city's aristocracy rallied to it (e.g. Cuoco see note 11 on p. 59). The French troops, however, braked the revolutionary aims of the Neapolitan bourgeoisie, and prevented the measures to destroy feudalism which could have won the countryside. Cardinal Ruffo, with British support, raised the countryside against the town, and when the French were forced by military setbacks in the North to withdraw in March, the Republic's days were numbered. The bourgeois régime was under attack both from outside and from the "*sarfedisti*"—a movement in support of the Bourbons among the lumpen-proletariat within, and it capitulated in June after a generous amnesty offer by Ruffo. The Bourbons then repudiated this amnesty, and there ensued a pitiless repression, with 129 executions and thousands of imprisonments and exiles, which decimated the Neapolitan intellectuals and destroyed finally any consensual basis for Bourbon rule.

were the invasions of the land in the Mezzogiorno and in Sicily, in 1920 the occupation of the factories in the North.⁶⁴ This relative synchronism and simultaneity on the one hand shows the existence, ever since 1815, of a relatively homogeneous politico-economic structure; on the other it shows how in periods of crisis it is the weakest and most marginal sector which reacts first.

The relation of city to countryside pertaining between North and South may also be studied in their differing cultural conceptions and mental attitudes. Allusion has already been made to the fact that B. Croce and G. Fortunato, at the beginning of the century, were at the head of a cultural movement which, in one way or another, counterposed itself to the cultural movement of the North (idealism against positivism, classicism or classicity against futurism).⁶⁵ It should be pointed out, however, that Sicily distinguishes itself from the Mezzogiorno—including from a cultural point of view: if Crispi can be seen as the man of Northern industrialism, Pirandello is also generally nearer to futurism. Gentile and actualism are also nearer to the futurist movement (understood in a wide sense, as opposition to traditional classicism; as a form of contemporary romanticism).⁶⁶ The intellectual strata of North and South differ in structure and in origin: in the Mezzogiorno the predominant type is still the pettifogging lawyer [*paglietta*], who ensures contact between the peasant masses and the landowners and State apparatus. In the North the dominant type is the factory "technician", who acts as a link between the mass of the workers and the management. The link with the State used to be a function of the

⁶⁴ The events of June 1814 were a series of bourgeois risings, in connection with an attempt by Murat to unite Italy from his base in Naples. Murat was defeated by the Austrians at Tolentino, and fled to Corsica. The Austrians launched a wave of repression aimed at the bourgeois liberals implicated in the risings.

For the Sicilian Fasci of 1893-94, see note 25 on p. 67. In 1898 the Milan workers demonstrated against rising prices and lack of food, and were bloodily repressed by General Bava Beccaris. For the occupation of the factories in 1920, see Introduction, p. xliii.

⁶⁵ See p. 72 and note 39 on p. 72.

⁶⁶ Crispi, Pirandello and Gentile were all Sicilians.

The futurist movement was launched by Marinetti in his Futurist Manifesto of 1909, and celebrated the vitality of the modern age, especially in its technical progress which was seen as sweeping away the old order. Gramsci, in a 1922 letter to Trotsky who had requested information on futurism for his "*Literature and Revolution*", described how the workers before the World War "had seen in futurism the elements of a struggle against the old academic culture of Italy, mummified and alien to the popular masses . . .". But during the war the futurists were violent interventionists, and subsequently their positions converged on the one hand with fascism and on the other with d'Annunzio's nationalism. Marinetti stood as a parliamentary candidate on Mussolini's list in 1919.

trade-union and political party organisations, led by a completely new intellectual stratum (the present State syndicalism,⁸⁷ whose consequence is the systematic diffusion of this social type on a national scale in a more coherent and thorough way than was possible for the old trade unions, is up to a certain point and in a certain sense an instrument of moral and political unification).

This complex city-countryside relationship can be studied in the general political programmes which were striving to assert themselves before the Fascists achieved governmental power. The programme of Giolitti⁸⁸ and the democratic liberals had the aim of creating an "urban" bloc (of industrialists and workers) in the North; this was to be the basis for a protectionist system, and reinforce the economy and Northern hegemony. The Mezzogiorno was reduced to the status of a semi-colonial market, a source of savings and taxes, and was kept "disciplined" by measures of two kinds. First, police measures: pitiless repression of every mass movement, with periodical massacres of peasants.* Second, political-police measures: personal favours to the "intellectual" stratum or *paglietta*—in the form of jobs in the public administration; of licence to pillage the local administration with impunity; and of ecclesiastical legislation less rigidly applied than elsewhere, leaving considerable patrimony at the disposal of the clergy, etc.—i.e. incorporation of the most active Southern elements "individually" into the leading personnel of the State, with particular "judicial" and bureaucratic privileges, etc. Thus the social stratum which could have organised the endemic Southern discontent, instead became an instrument of Northern policy, a kind of auxiliary private police. Southern discontent, for lack of leadership, did not succeed in assuming a normal political form; its manifestations, finding expression only in an anarchic turbulence, were presented as a "matter for the police" and the courts. In reality men like Croce and Fortunato abetted this form of corruption, even if

⁸⁷ i.e. the "corporations" to which workers had compulsorily to belong in fascist Italy.

⁸⁸ Giovanni Giolitti (1842-1928) dominated Italian parliamentary politics between 1900 and 1914, and was prime minister in 1892-93, 1906-09, 1911-14, and 1920-21 (when he encouraged the fascists as a counter-balancing force to the socialists). Gramsci analyses his policy at greater length in *Alcuni temi*.

* In his obituary of Giolitti in *Nuova Antologia*, 1 August 1928, Spectator (Missirotti) expressed surprise that Giolitti was always strenuously opposed to any dissemination of socialism or syndicalism in the South. But in fact the thing is natural and obvious, since a working-class protectionism—reformism, co-operatives, public works is only possible if partial; in other words, every privilege presupposes somebody being sacrificed and exploited.

passively and indirectly, by means of their fetishistic conception of unity.*

There was also a politico-moral factor which should not be forgotten; this was the campaign of intimidation waged against every assertion, however objective, that there existed motives for conflict between North and South. One might recall the conclusion of the Pais-Serra enquiry into Sardinia, after the commercial crisis of the decade 1890-1900; also the accusation, recalled earlier, which was hurled by Crispi at the Sicilian Fasci, of being sold to the English.⁷⁰ This form of hysterical unitarianism was especially prevalent among the Sicilian intellectuals (as a consequence of the formidable peasant pressure on the nobility's land, and also of the local popularity of Crispi); it even revealed itself quite recently in Natoli's attack on Croce for an innocuous reference to Sicilian separatism in relation to the Kingdom of Naples (see Croce's reply in *Critica*).⁷¹

Giolitti's programme was "upset" by two factors: 1. the coming to the fore of the intransigents in the Socialist Party under the leadership of Mussolini, and their flirtation with the Southernists (free exchange, the Molfetta election, etc.), which destroyed the Northern urban bloc;⁷² 2. the introduction of universal suffrage, which enlarged the parliamentary base of the Mezzogiorno to an unprecedented extent, and made individual corruption difficult (too many to be easily corrupted—hence appearance of political thugs). Giolitti changed partners: he replaced the urban bloc by (or rather counterposed to it, in order to prevent its complete

* See the Fortunato Salvemini episode in connection with *Unità*, recounted by Prezzolini in the first edition of *Cultura Italiana*.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ For Fortunato, see note 39 on p. 72; for Salvemini, see p. xx ff. Introduction. Salvemini's "*Unità*" was published 1911-15 and 1918-20, and suggested to Gramsci the name for the subsequent official organ of the PCI, founded in 1924. In the first edition of *La Cultura Italiana* (see note 41 on p. 72), Prezzolini wrote of *Unità*: "its title came from senator Fortunato, concerned for that 'unity of Italy' which, to his historian's mind, has always seemed neither entirely nor solidly achieved".

⁷⁰ See note 26 on p. 67.

⁷¹ See Luigi Natoli, *Rivendicazioni attraverso le rivoluzioni siciliane del 1848-60*, commented on by Gramsci on PP. pp. 135-36.

⁷² For the intransigent wing of the PSI, see General Introduction; they were opposed to any collaboration, however indirect, with the bourgeois government—hence making impossible a continuation of the effective bloc between Giolitti and the reformist leaders of the PSI. Mussolini, as editor of *Avanti!*, was their main spokesman until his defection in 1914. For the Molfetta election of 1913, see following paragraph; as Gramsci explains, it showed the *Corriere della Sera*, the voice of the Lombard industrialists, prospecting a new alliance with a "Southern bloc" in place of the now unviable Giolitti policy of a bloc with the reformist leaders of the Northern working class.

collapse) the "Gentiloni pact".⁷³ This was ultimately a bloc between Northern industry and the farmers of the "organic and normal" countryside (the Catholic electoral forces coincided geographically with those of the socialists: i.e. they were spread over the North and the Centre); it had additional support in the South as well—at least to an extent immediately sufficient to "rectify" satisfactorily the consequences of the mass electorate's enlargement.

The other programme or general political approach was the one which may be termed that of the *Corriere della Sera*, or of Luigi Albertini;⁷⁴ this may be seen as an alliance between a section of the Northern industrialists (headed by the textile, cotton and silk masters—exporters and hence free traders) and the rural bloc of the Mezzogiorno. The *Corriere* supported Salvemini against Giolitti in the Molfetta election of 1913 (Ugo Ojetti's campaign), and it supported first the Salandra Ministry and subsequently that of Nitti⁷⁵—in other words, the first two governments formed by Southern politicians.*

The enlargement of the suffrage in 1913 had already provoked the first signs of that phenomenon which was to have its maximum expression in 1919–20–21 as a consequence of the politico-organisational experience acquired by the peasant masses during the war—i.e. the relative break-up of the Southern rural bloc, and the detachment of the peasants, led by a part of the intellectuals (officers during the war), from the great landowners. So one got

⁷³ At the elections of 1913 the first under universal suffrage Giolitti came to an agreement with Count Gentiloni, the president of the Catholic Electoral Union of Italy, whereby Catholic voters would support the governmental candidates in order to check the advance of the socialists.

⁷⁴ Luigi Albertini (1871–1941) became editor of *Corriere della Sera* in 1900, and built it up into the major bourgeois newspaper in Italy. He was a liberal-conservative, in favour of intervention in the war but anti fascist; he was removed from the editorship of the paper in 1925, whereafter the *Corriere* was aligned behind the fascist régime.

⁷⁵ Antonio Salandra (1853–1931), a bourgeois politician of the Right, was prime minister in 1914–15; he was forced to resign under neutralist pressure because of his support for intervention in the War, but became prime minister again 1915–16 after the interventionists had won the day.

Francesco Nitti (1868–1953) was an economist and centrist politician, prime minister 1919–20.

* The Sicilians have to be considered separately. They have always had a lion's share in all Ministries from 1860 onwards, and have had several Presidents of the Council unlike the Mezzogiorno, whose first leader was Salandra. This Sicilian "invasion" is to be explained by the blackmailing policy of the island's parties, who secretly have always maintained a "separatist" spirit in favour of England. Crispi's accusation⁷⁶ was, in an ill considered form, the manifestation of a pre-occupation which really obsessed the most responsible and sensitive national ruling group.

⁷⁶ See note 26 on p. 67.

Sardism,⁷⁷ one got the Sicilian reformist party (the so-called Bonomi parliamentary group was constituted by Bonomi and 22 Sicilian deputies),⁷⁸ with its extreme separatist wing represented by *Sicilia Nuova*; and one got the *Rinnovamento* group in the Mezzogiorno, made up of war-veterans, which attempted to set up regional action parties similar to that of Sardinia.* In this movement, the autonomous importance of the peasant masses decreases progressively from Sardinia via the Mezzogiorno to Sicily, depending on the organised strength, the prestige, and the ideological pressure exercised by the great landowners. In Sicily these are maximally well-organised and united; in Sardinia on the other hand they have relatively small importance. The relative independence of the respective intellectual strata varies in a similar fashion—in inverse proportion, of course, to that of the landowners.**

In order to analyse the socio-political function of the intellectuals, it is necessary to recall and examine their psychological attitude towards the fundamental classes which they put into contact in the various fields.⁸⁰ Do they have a “paternalistic” attitude towards the instrumental classes? Or do they think they are an organic expression of them? Do they have a “servile” attitude towards the ruling classes, or do they think that they themselves are leaders, an integral part of the ruling classes? During the Risorgimento, the so-called Action Party had a “paternalistic” attitude; it therefore only succeeded to a very limited extent in bringing the great popular masses into contact with the State. So-called “transformism”⁸¹ was only the parliamentary expression of the fact that the Action Party was incorporated in molecular fashion by the

⁷⁷ *Sardismo* was a Sardinian autonomist movement which developed after the First World War. The *Partito Sardo d'Azione* was founded in 1920, but split when the fascists came to power. One section joined the fascists, another, led notably by Emilio Lussu, joined the Aventine opposition; its leaders were exiled, but returned to revive the party during the Resistance (1943–5).

⁷⁸ Ivanoe Bonomi (1873–1952) was at first a reformist socialist. Expelled from the PSI together with Bissolati in 1912, he remained in parliament as an independent centrist politician, and was prime minister 1921–22.

* See Torracca's review *Volontà*, the transformation of *Popolo Romano*, etc.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Francesco Torracca (1853–1938), Professor of comparative, and later Italian, literature at Naples University, and a senator from 1920.

** By “intellectuals” must be understood not those strata commonly described by this term, but in general the entire social stratum which exercises an organisational function in the wide sense—whether in the field of production, or in that of culture, or in that of political administration. They correspond to the NCOs and junior officers in the army, and also partly to the higher officers who have risen from the ranks.

⁸⁰ See “The Formation of the Intellectuals” on pp. 5–14 above.

⁸¹ See note 8 on p. 58 above.

Moderates, and that the popular masses were decapitated, not absorbed into the ambit of the new State.

The relation between city and countryside is the necessary starting-point for the study of the fundamental motor forces of Italian history, and of the programmatic points in the light of which the Action Party's policies during the Risorgimento should be considered and judged. Schematically, one might have this picture: 1. the Northern urban force; 2. the Southern rural force; 3. the Northern-Central rural force; 4. the rural force of Sicily; 5. that of Sardinia. The first of these forces retains its function of "locomotive" in any case; what is needed, therefore, is an examination of the various "most advantageous" combinations for building a "train" to move forward through history as fast as possible. Meanwhile the first force initially has its own problems: internal ones—of organisation, of how to articulate its own homogeneity, of politico-military leadership (Piedmontese hegemony,⁸² relations between Milan and Turin, etc.). But it remains a constant that if this force has attained a certain level of unity and combativity, it quite automatically exercises an "indirect" directive function over the others. Moreover, it would appear that its assumption, during the various phases of the Risorgimento, of an intransigent position of struggle against foreign domination had the result of stirring up the progressive forces of the South: hence the relative synchronism, but not simultaneity, of the movements of 1820–21, of 1831, of 1848.⁸³ In 1859–60, this historico-political "mechanism" operated to maximum effect, since the North initiated the struggle, the Centre came over peacefully (or almost so), and in the South the Bourbon State collapsed under the (relatively weak) thrust of the Garibaldini. This happened because the Action Party (Garibaldi) intervened at the right time, after the Moderates (Cavour) had organised the North and Centre; i.e. it was not the same politico-military leadership (Moderates or Action Party) which organised the relative simultaneity, but the (mechanical) collaboration of the two leaderships, integrating successfully.

The first force therefore had to tackle the problem of organising around itself the urban forces of the other national sectors, and especially of the South. This problem was the most difficult, fraught

⁸² See "The Function of Piedmont" on pp. 104–106 below.

⁸³ 1820–21 was the year of the first wave of "carbonarist" revolutions in Italy, France, Spain, Greece, etc. Only the Greek revolution had any durable results, but in various of the Italian states the risings had some initial success, notably in Piedmont, and at Naples. The second wave of carbonarist risings occurred in 1831, affecting notably Modena, Parma and the Papal State.

with contradictions and undercurrents which unleashed torrents of passionate feelings (a farcical solution of these contradictions was the so-called parliamentary revolution of 1876).⁸⁴ But its solution, precisely for this reason, was one of the cruxes in the nation's development. The urban forces are socially homogeneous, hence must occupy positions of perfect equality. That was theoretically true, but historically the question posed itself differently: the urban forces of the North were clearly at the head of their national sector, while for the urban forces of the South that was not true, at least not to the same extent. The urban forces of the North had therefore to persuade those of the South that their directive function should be limited to ensuring the "leadership" of North over South in a general relation of city to countryside. In other words, the directive function of the Southern urban forces could not be other than a subordinate moment of the vaster directive function of the North. The most strident contradiction was created by this series of facts. The urban force of the South could not be considered as something on its own, independent of that of the North. To pose the question in such a way would have meant asserting in advance an incurable "national" rift—a rift so serious that not even a federalist solution would have been able to heal it. It would have meant asserting the existence of separate nations, between which all that could have been achieved was a diplomatic-military alliance against the common enemy, Austria. (The sole element of community or solidarity, in short, would have consisted simply in having a "common" enemy.) In reality, however, there existed only certain "aspects" of such a national question, not "all" the aspects nor even the most essential ones. The most serious aspect was the weak position of the Southern urban forces in relation to the rural forces, an unfavourable relation which sometimes took the form of a literal subjugation of the city to the countryside. The close links between the urban forces of North and South gave to the latter the strength which came from representing the prestige of the former, and were destined to help the Southern urban forces to gain their autonomy, to acquire consciousness of their historical leadership function in a "concrete" and not merely theoretical and abstract manner, suggesting the solutions to give to the great regional problems. It was natural that in the South there should be strong forces of opposition to unity. The weightiest task in resolving the situation in any case fell to the urban forces of the North, which not

⁸⁴ In 1876 the "Left" in parliament formed a Ministry for the first time.

only had to convince their "brothers" of the South, but had to begin [to convince] themselves of this political system as an entity. In practical terms, therefore, the question posed itself in the existence of a strong centre of political leadership, with which strong and popular personalities from the South and the islands would necessarily have had to collaborate. The problem of creating unity between North and South was closely linked with, and to a great extent absorbed into the problem of creating a cohesion and solidarity among all the national urban forces.*

The Northern-Central rural forces posed in their turn a series of problems which the urban force of the North had to confront in order to establish a normal city-countryside relationship, eliminating interferences and influences extraneous in origin to the development of the new State. In these rural forces, two currents had to be distinguished: the secular, and the clerico-Austrian. The clerical force was strongest in Lombardy-Veneto, as well as in Tuscany and in a part of the Papal State. The secular force was strongest in Piedmont, but had varying influence in the rest of Italy too—not only in the Papal Legations (especially Romagna) but also in the other regions, even including the Mezzogiorno and the Islands. If they had resolved these immediate relations successfully, the Northern urban forces would have set a rhythm for all similar questions on a national scale. On this whole series of problems, the Action Party failed totally. It in fact limited itself to making into a question of principle, and into an essential element of its programme, what was simply a question of the political terrain upon which it might have been possible to focus, and find a legal solution for, such problems: the question of the Constituent Assembly. One cannot say that the Moderate Party failed, since its objectives were the organic expansion of Piedmont, and soldiers for the Piedmontese army rather than insurrections or armies of Garibaldi on too large a scale.

Why did the Action Party not pose the agrarian question globally? That the Moderates would not pose it was obvious: their approach to the national question required a bloc of all the right-wing forces—including the classes of the great landowners—around Piedmont as a State and as an army. Austria's threat to resolve the agrarian question in favour of the peasants—a threat carried out in Galicia against the Polish nobles in favour of the Ruthenian

* The line of argument developed above is in fact valid for all three sectors of the South: Naples and the mainland, Sicily, Sardinia.

peasants⁸⁵—not only threw into confusion those in Italy whose interests would have been touched, and caused all the oscillations of the aristocracy (Milan events of February 1853, and act of homage by the most illustrious Milanese families to Franz Josef on the very eve of the Belfiore hangings);⁸⁶ it also paralysed the Action Party itself, which in this field thought like the Moderates, and considered as “national” the aristocracy and the landowners, and not the millions of peasants. Only after February 1853 did Mazzini begin to make the occasional allusion of a substantially democratic kind (see his *Correspondence* for the period), but he was not capable of a decisive radicalisation of his abstract programme. The political conduct of the Garibaldini in Sicily in 1860 should be studied—a political conduct which was dictated by Crispi: the peasant movements of insurrection against the barons were crushed pitilessly, and the anti-peasant National Guard was created. Typical was the repressive expedition of Nino Bixio into the Catania region, where the insurrections were most violent. Yet even in G. C. Abba’s *Noterelle* there are elements showing that the agrarian question was the spring to set the great masses in motion: it is enough to recall Abba’s conversations with the monk who goes off to meet the Garibaldini immediately after the Marsala landing.⁸⁷ In certain of G. Verga’s short stories there are picturesque elements from these peasant risings, which the National Guard smothered by means of terror and mass shootings.⁸⁸ This aspect of the expedition of the Thousand has never been studied and analysed.

The failure to pose the agrarian question led to the near impossibility of resolving the problem of clericalism and the anti-unitarian

⁸⁵ In 1845 the nobles and bourgeois of Galicia rose against the Austrians; the latter put down the uprising by mobilising the Ruthenian peasants of the region, promising them land in order to gain their support.

⁸⁶ For the Milan insurrection of February 1853, see note 52 on p. 82. Later in the same year the Austrians hanged a number of Mazzini’s followers in the valley of Belfiore, near Verona.

⁸⁷ In Giuseppe Abba’s *Noterelle di uno dei Mille*, the author recounts how a monk came to meet the Garibaldini and informed them eloquently of the peasantry’s thirst for land.

⁸⁸ Notably in the story *Libertà*, an account of a massacre of local notables by a village population excited by the idea that the Garibaldini had brought them freedom and equality. After the massacre, the peasants find that they can’t get on without the “gentlemen”—a characteristic motif of Verga’s fundamentally conservative populism—and are then led away to prison in the city, without ever understanding what they have done wrong. The story ends with one of the prisoners saying as he is sentenced: “Where are you taking me? To gaol? Why, why? I never got so much as a square yard of land! Didn’t they say that freedom had come?”

attitude of the Pope.⁸⁹ In this respect, the Moderates were far more audacious than the Action Party: it is true that they did not distribute ecclesiastical property among the peasants, but they used it to create a new stratum of great and medium landowners tied to the new political situation, and did not hesitate to lay hands on landed property, even if it was only that of the Orders. The Action Party, moreover, was paralysed in its action towards the peasants by Mazzini's wish for a religious reform. This not only was of no interest to the great rural masses, it on the contrary rendered them susceptible to being incited against the new heretics. The example of the French Revolution was there to show that the Jacobins, who had succeeded in crushing all the right-wing parties up to and including the Girondins on the terrain of the agrarian question, who had succeeded not merely in preventing a rural coalition against Paris but in multiplying their supporters in the provinces, were damaged by Robespierre's attempts to instigate a religious reform—although such a reform had, in the real historical process, an immediate significance and concreteness.* [1934; 1st version 1929-30]

THE MODERATES AND THE INTELLECTUALS

Why the Moderates were bound to gain the upper hand as far as the majority of intellectuals were concerned. Gioberti⁹² and Mazzini. Gioberti offered the intellectuals a philosophy which appeared original and at the same time national, such as would put Italy at least on the same level as the more advanced nations, and give a new dignity to Italian thought. Mazzini, on the other hand only offered woolly statements, and philosophical allusions which to many intellectuals, especially Neapolitans, must have

⁸⁹ i.e. the Pope's refusal to accept the end of his temporal power in the Papal States, and his consequent opposition to Italian unity before the Risorgimento, and refusal to come to terms with the post Risorgimento Italian state—until the Concordat of 1929.

* It would be necessary to study carefully the real agrarian policy of the Roman Republic,⁹⁰ and the true character of the repressive mission entrusted by Mazzini to Felice Orsini⁹¹ in the Romagna and the Marche: in this period up to 1870 (and even afterwards), the term "brigandry" almost always meant the chaotic, turbulent movement, punctuated by ferocity, of the peasants trying to gain possession of the land.

⁹⁰ The Roman Republic was proclaimed in January 1849, and Mazzini was elected to head the triumvirate which governed it. It fell to the French after a three-month siege in June of the same year.

⁹¹ See note 16 on p. 62.

⁹² See note 36 on p. 399.

appeared empty chatter (the Abbé Galiani had taught them to ridicule such ways of thinking and reasoning).⁹³

Problem of the school: activity on the part of the Moderates to introduce the pedagogic principle of monitorial teaching (Confalonieri, Capponi, etc.); movement of Ferrante Aporti and the foundling schools, linked to the problem of pauperism.⁹⁴ Among the Moderates appeared the only concrete pedagogic movement opposed to the "Jesuitical" school; it could not fail to be effective, both among the lay, to whom it gave a personality of their own within the school, and among the liberalising and anti-Jesuitical clergy (ferocious hostility to Ferrante Aporti, etc.; the sheltering and education of abandoned children was a clerical monopoly, and these initiatives broke the monopoly). Scholastic activities of a liberal or liberalising character have great significance for grasping the mechanism of the Moderates' hegemony over the intellectuals. Scholastic activity, at all its levels, has an enormous importance (economic as well) for intellectuals of all degrees. And at that time it had an even greater importance than it does today, given the narrowness of the social structures and the few roads open to the initiative of the petite bourgeoisie. (Today, journalism, the political parties, industry, a very extensive State apparatus, etc., have broadened the possibilities of employment to an unheard of extent.)

The hegemony of a directive centre over the intellectuals asserts itself by two principal routes: 1. a general conception of life, a

⁹³ The abbé Galiani (1728-1787) was a Neapolitan economist (opposed to free trade and the theories of the physiocrats) and man of letters. Noted as a wit, he was typical of the enlightened, rationalist intellectual stratum of Naples which was to become the "Jacobins" of the Parthenopean Republic of 1799.

⁹⁴ The monitor system was devised by Bell and Lancaster in late eighteenth-century England, and Confalonieri (see note 51 on p. 81) made the first attempt to introduce it into Italy in 1819-21.

Gino Capponi (1792-1876), educationalist, historian and politician, was the author of *Frammento sull'educazione* (1841), in which he expressed his scepticism about any attempt on the part of teachers to predetermine "from outside" the development of the "spiritual activity" of children. This type of Rousseauesque, liberal theory of learning is criticised by Gramsci, e.g. Int. p. 115: "it is believed that a child's mind is like a ball of string which the teacher helps to unwind. In reality each generation educates the new generation, i.e. forms it, and education is a struggle against instincts linked to the elementary biological functions, a struggle against nature, to dominate it and create the 'contemporary' man of the epoch."

Ferrante Aporti (1791-1858) was an educationalist, founder of the first infant schools in Italy (Cremona 1829, etc.). The ideology behind these schools derived from Rousseau and Pestalozzi; the first model for them was Owen's 1816 infant school in Scotland. They were opposed strongly by the Church in Italy, both for their liberal ideological connotations and for the challenge they posed to the clerical monopoly.

philosophy (Gioberti), which offers to its adherents an intellectual "dignity" providing a principle of differentiation from the old ideologies which dominated by coercion, and an element of struggle against them; 2. a scholastic programme, an educative principle and original pedagogy which interests that fraction of the intellectuals which is the most homogeneous and the most numerous (the teachers, from the primary teachers to the university professors), and gives them an activity of their own in the technical field.

The Scholars' congresses which were repeatedly organised in the period of the early Risorgimento had a double effect: 1. they regrouped the intellectuals of the highest grade, concentrating them and multiplying their influence; 2. they obtained a more rapid concentration and a more decisive orientation of the intellectuals of the lower grades, who normally tend to follow the university professors and great scholars, through spirit of caste.

The study of encyclopaedic and specialised reviews furnishes another aspect of the Moderates' hegemony. A party like that of the Moderates offered the mass of the intellectuals all the satisfactions for their general needs which can be offered by a government (by a governing party) through the State services. After 1848-49, the Piedmontese State served perfectly as far as this function of Italian governing party was concerned; it welcomed the exiled intellectuals, and provided a model of what a future unified State would do. [1934]

THE FUNCTION OF PIEDMONT

The function of Piedmont in the Italian Risorgimento is that of a "ruling class". In reality, what was involved was not that throughout the peninsula there existed nuclei of a homogeneous ruling class whose irresistible tendency to unite determined the formation of the new Italian national State. These nuclei existed, indubitably, but their tendency to unite was extremely problematic; also, more importantly, they—each in its own sphere—were not "leading".⁹⁵ The "leader" presupposes the "led", and who was "led" by these nuclei? These nuclei did not wish to "lead" anybody, i.e. they did not wish to concord their interests and aspirations with the interests

⁹⁵ This passage presents insuperable translation difficulties (see note 5 on p. 55). Gramsci uses "*dirigente*" here both in its usual sense of "ruling", and in contradistinction to "*dominante*"—when we have translated it "leading". Inevitably good English has had to some extent to be sacrificed here, in the interests of fidelity to Gramsci's original text.

and aspirations of other groups. They wished to "dominate" and not to "lead". Furthermore, they wanted their interests to dominate, rather than their persons; in other words, they wanted a new force, independent of every compromise and condition, to become the arbiter of the Nation: this force was Piedmont and hence the function of the monarchy. Thus Piedmont had a function which can, from certain aspects, be compared to that of a party, i.e. of the leading personnel of a social group (and in fact people always spoke of the "Piedmont party"): with the additional feature that it was in fact a State, with an army, a diplomatic service, etc.

This fact is of the greatest importance for the concept of "passive revolution"⁹⁶—the fact, that is, that what was involved was not a social group which "led" other groups, but a State which, even though it had limitations as a power, "led" the group which should have been "leading" and was able to put at the latter's disposal an army and a politico-diplomatic strength. One may refer to what has been called the function of "Piedmont" in international politico-historical language. Serbia before the war posed as the "Piedmont" of the Balkans. (Moreover France after 1789 and for many years, up to the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoléon, was in this sense the Piedmont of Europe.) That Serbia did not succeed as Piedmont succeeded is due to the fact that after the war there occurred a political awakening of the peasantry such as did not exist after 1848. If one studies closely what is happening in the kingdom of Yugoslavia, one sees that within it the "Serbian" forces or those favourable to Serb hegemony are the forces which oppose agrarian reform. Both in Croatia and in the other non-Serb regions we find that there is an anti-Serb rural intellectual bloc, and that the conservative forces are favourable to Serbia. In this case, too, there do not exist local "hegemonic" groups—they are under the hegemony of Serbia; meanwhile the subversive forces do not have, as a social function, any great importance. Anybody who observes Serb affairs superficially might wonder what would have happened if so-called brigandage of the kind which occurred round Naples and in Sicily from 1860 to 1870 had occurred in Yugoslavia after 1919. Undoubtedly the phenomenon is the same, but the social weight and political experience of the peasant masses are quite different since 1919 from what they were after 1848. The important thing is to analyse more profoundly the significance of a "Piedmont"-type function in passive revolutions—i.e. the fact that a State

⁹⁶ See note 11 on p. 59, and pp. 106–120 below.

replaces the local social groups in leading a struggle of renewal. It is one of the cases in which these groups have the function of "domination" without that of "leadership": dictatorship without hegemony. The hegemony will be exercised by a part of the social group over the entire group, and not by the latter over other forces in order to give power to the movement, radicalise it, etc. on the "Jacobin" model.

Studies aimed at capturing the analogies between the period which followed the fall of Napoleon and that which followed the war of 1914-18. The analogies are only seen from two viewpoints: territorial division, and the more conspicuous and superficial one of the attempt to give a stable legal organisation to international relations (Holy Alliance and League of Nations). However, it would seem that the most important characteristic to examine is the one which has been called that of "passive revolution"—a problem whose existence is not manifest, since an external parallelism with the France of 1789-1815 is lacking. And yet, everybody recognises that the war of 1914-18 represents an historical break, in the sense that a whole series of questions which piled up individually before 1914 have precisely formed a "mound", modifying the general structure of the previous process. It is enough to think of the importance which the trade-union phenomenon has assumed, a general term in which various problems and processes of development, of differing importance and significance, are lumped together (parliamentarianism, industrial organisation, democracy, liberalism, etc.), but which objectively reflects the fact that a new social force has been constituted, and has a weight which can no longer be ignored, etc. [1933]

THE CONCEPT OF PASSIVE REVOLUTION

The concept of "passive revolution"⁹⁷ must be rigorously derived from the two fundamental principles of political science: 1. that no social formation disappears as long as the productive forces which have developed within it still find room for further forward movement; 2. that a society does not set itself tasks for whose solution the necessary conditions have not already been incubated, etc.⁹⁸ It

⁹⁷ See note 11 on p. 59; also introduction to Notes on Italian History, pp. 44-7.

⁹⁸ These principles, here quoted from memory by Gramsci, are taken from Marx's Preface to *The Critique of Political Economy*: "No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve . . ."

goes without saying that these principles must first be developed critically in all their implications, and purged of every residue of mechanicism and fatalism. They must therefore be referred back to the description of the three fundamental moments into which a "situation" or an equilibrium of forces can be distinguished, with the greatest possible stress on the second moment (equilibrium of political forces), and especially on the third moment (politico-military equilibrium).⁹⁹

It may be observed that Pisacane, in his *Essays*, is concerned precisely with this third moment: unlike Mazzini, he understands all the importance of the presence in Italy of a war-hardened Austrian army, always ready to intervene at any point on the peninsula, and with moreover behind it all the military strength of the Habsburg Empire—an ever-ready matrix of new armies of reinforcement. Another historical element to be recalled is the development of Christianity in the bosom of the Roman Empire. Also the current phenomenon of Gandhism in India, and Tolstoy's theory of non-resistance to evil, both of which have so much in common with the first phase of Christianity (before the Edict of Milan).¹⁰⁰ Gandhism and Tolstoyism are naïve theorisations of the "passive revolution" with religious overtones. Certain so-called "liquidationist"¹⁰¹ movements and the reactions they provoked

⁹⁹ For the three "moments" to which Gramsci refers, see "Analysis of Situations", on pp. 175–185 below.

¹⁰⁰ The Edict whereby Constantine, in A.D. 313, recognised Christianity as the official religion of the Empire.

¹⁰¹ This could be a reference to the liquidationist tendency in the Russian Social-Democratic Party during 1908 and in the following years, condemned at the Fifth Party Congress in December 1908 and the subject of numerous attacks by Lenin who identified its essence as the desire for the Party to abandon illegal activity. However, it seems likely that the reference is to more recent events within the PCI. Between 1922 and 1924, the main reason for Gramsci's continued support for Bordiga was his fear of the "liquidationism" of Tasca and the Right, i.e. their readiness to accept an interpretation of the United Front policy (an interpretation which was incidentally also that of the Comintern) which would lead to fusion with the PSI and the effective "liquidation" of the PCI as formed at Livorno. See, for example, exchange of letters between Gramsci and Piero Sraffa, in *Ordine Nuovo*, April 1924. From 1925 on, the Right was incorporated into the leadership, and after Gramsci's arrest the party was in effect led by Togliatti and Tasca together. After the Comintern's left turn in 1929, Tasca—who was close to Bukharin, Humbert-Droz, etc. was accused like them of "liquidationism", in the "right" period of 1927–28. Gramsci as always is concerned to establish a dialectical position, rejecting both the "liquidationists" who make passive revolution into a programme and abandon the revolutionary perspective, and also those who react against this by a mechanical, and voluntarist, advocacy of frontal attack when this can only lead to defeat. In fact he is faithful to his interpretation of the "dual perspective" of the Fifth World Congress, against both the "right" period of 1927–28 and the "left" period which followed it.

should also be recalled, in connection with the tempo and form of certain situations (especially of the third moment). The point of departure for the study will be Vincenzo Cuoco's work on the subject; but it is obvious that Cuoco's phrase for the Neapolitan revolution of 1799 can be no more than a cue, since the concept has been completely modified and enriched.

Can the concept of "passive revolution", in the sense attributed by Vincenzo Cuoco to the first period of the Italian Risorgimento, be related to the concept of "war of position" in contrast to war of manœuvre?¹⁰² In other words, did these concepts have a meaning after the French Revolution, and can the twin figures of Proudhon and Gioberti be explained in terms of the panic created by the Terror of 1793, as Sorellism can be in terms of the panic following the Paris massacres of 1871? In other words, does there exist an absolute identity between war of position and passive revolution? Or at least does there exist, or can there be conceived, an entire historical period in which the two concepts must be considered identical—until the point at which the war of position once again becomes a war of manœuvre?

The "restorations" need to be judged "dynamically", as a "ruse of providence" in Vico's sense.¹⁰³ One problem is the following: in the struggle Cavour-Mazzini, in which Cavour is the exponent of the passive revolution/war of position and Mazzini of popular initiative/war of manœuvre, are not both of them indispensable to precisely the same extent? Yet it has to be taken into account that, whereas Cavour was aware of his role (at least up to a certain point) in as much as he understood the role of Mazzini, the latter does not seem to have been aware either of his own or of Cavour's. If, on the contrary, Mazzini had possessed such awareness—in other words, if he had been a realistic politician and not a visionary apostle (i.e. if he had not been Mazzini)—then the equilibrium which resulted from the convergence of the two men's activities would have been different, would have been more favourable to Mazzinianism. In other words, the Italian State would have been constituted on a less retrograde and more modern basis. And since similar situations

¹⁰² See pp. 229-39 below, and introduction to "State and Civil Society", pp. 206-9.

¹⁰³ The actual phrase is not Vico's—it is perhaps an echo of Hegel's "ruse of reason"—but the idea is. Vico's theory of divine providence held that men themselves constructed a world according to a divine plan of which they were not aware. "For out of the passions of men each bent on his private advantage, for the sake of which they would live like wild beasts in the wilderness, it [providence] has made the civil institutions by which they may live in human society." Vico, *The New Science*, Cornell, 1968, p. 62.

almost always arise in every historical development, one should see if it is not possible to draw from this some general principle of political science and art. One may apply to the concept of passive revolution (documenting it from the Italian Risorgimento) the interpretative criterion of molecular changes which in fact progressively modify the pre-existing composition of forces, and hence become the matrix of new changes. Thus, in the Italian Risorgimento, it has been seen how the composition of the moderate forces was progressively modified by the passing over to Cavourism (after 1848) of ever new elements of the Action Party, so that on the one hand neo-Guelphism¹⁰⁴ was liquidated, and on the other the Mazzinian movement was impoverished (Garibaldi's oscillations, etc. also belong to this process). This element is therefore the initial phase of the phenomenon which is later called "transformism",¹⁰⁵ and whose importance as a form of historical development has not as yet, it seems, been adequately emphasised.

Pursue further the notion that, while Cavour was aware of his role in as much as he was critically aware of that of Mazzini, the latter, as a consequence of his scanty or non-existent awareness of Cavour's role, had in fact little awareness of his own either. Hence his vacillations (for example at Milan in the period following the Five Days,¹⁰⁶ and on other occasions) and his ill-timed initiatives—which therefore became factors only benefiting the policies of Piedmont. This is an exemplification of the theoretical problem, posed in the *Poverty of Philosophy*, of how the dialectic must be understood.¹⁰⁷ Neither Proudhon nor Mazzini understood the necessity for each member of a dialectical opposition to seek to be itself totally and throw into the struggle all the political and moral "resources" it possesses, since only in that way can it achieve a genuine dialectical "transcendence" of its opponent. The retort will be made that this was not understood by Gioberti or the theoreticians of the passive revolution or "revolution/restoration"* either, but in fact their case is a different one. Their theoretical "incompre-

¹⁰⁴ See note 9 on p. 58.

¹⁰⁵ See note 8 on p. 58.

¹⁰⁶ The insurrection in May 1848 against the Austrians.

¹⁰⁷ See especially chapter II.

* The political literature produced on '48 by Marxist scholars will have to be looked at, but there does not appear to be much to hope for in this direction. What happened in Italy, for instance, was only studied with the help of Bolton King's books, etc.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Bolton King (1860–1937) was an English historian, author of *Life of Mazzini* (1902), *A History of Italian Unity* (1899; Italian translation 1909–10); *Fascism in Italy* (1931).

hension" expressed in practice the necessity for the "thesis" to achieve its full development, up to the point where it would even succeed in incorporating a part of the antithesis itself—in order, that is, not to allow itself to be "transcended" in the dialectical opposition. The thesis alone in fact develops to the full its potential for struggle, up to the point where it absorbs even the so-called representatives of the antithesis: it is precisely in this that the passive revolution or revolution/restoration consists. The problem of the political struggle's transition from a "war of manoeuvre" to a "war of position" certainly needs to be considered at this juncture. In Europe this transition took place after 1848, and was not understood by Mazzini and his followers, as it was on the contrary by certain others: the same transition took place after 1871, etc. At the time, the question was hard to understand for men like Mazzini, in view of the fact that military wars had not yet furnished the model—and indeed military theory was developing in the direction of war of movement. One will have to see whether there are any relevant allusions in Pisacane, who was the military theoretician of Mazzinianism.

However, the main reason for studying Pisacane is that he was the only one who tried to give the Action Party a substantive and not merely formal content—as an antithesis transcending traditional positions. Nor can it be said that, for such an historical outcome to be achieved, a popular armed insurrection was an imperative necessity—as Mazzini believed to the point of obsession (i.e. not realistically, but with the fervour of a missionary). The popular intervention which was not possible in the concentrated and instantaneous form of an insurrection, did not take place even in the "diffused" and capillary form of indirect pressure—though the latter would have been possible, and perhaps was in fact the indispensable premiss for the former. The concentrated or instantaneous form was rendered impossible by the military technique of the time—but only partially so; in other words the impossibility existed in so far as that concentrated and instantaneous form was not preceded by long ideological and political preparation, organically devised in advance to reawaken popular passions and enable them to be concentrated and brought simultaneously to detonation point.

After 1848, only the Moderates made a critique of the methods which had led up to the débâcle. (Indeed the entire Moderate movement renewed itself: neo-Guelphism was liquidated, new men occupied the top positions of leadership.) No self-criticism, by

contrast, on the part of the Mazzinians—or rather only a self-criticism by liquidation, in the sense that many elements abandoned Mazzini and came to form the left wing of the Piedmontese party. The only “orthodox” attempt—i.e. from within—was Pisacane’s essays; but these never became the platform for a new organic policy, notwithstanding the fact that Mazzini himself recognised that Pisacane had a “strategic conception” of the Italian national revolution.

Other aspects of the relation “passive revolution/war of position” in the Italian Risorgimento can be studied too. The most important of these are, on the one hand what can be called the “personnel” aspect, and on the other that of the “revolutionary levy”. The “personnel” aspect can precisely be compared to what occurred in the World War, in the relationship on the one hand between career officers and those called up from the reserves, and on the other between conscripts and volunteers/commandos. The career officers corresponded in the Risorgimento to the regular, organic, traditional, etc. political parties, which at the moment of action (1848) revealed themselves inept or almost so, and which in 1848–49 were overtaken by the popular-Mazzinian-democratic tidal wave. This tidal wave was chaotic, formless, “*extempore*” so to speak, but it nonetheless, under an improvised leadership (or nearly so—at any rate not one formed beforehand as was the case with the Moderate party), obtained successes which were indubitably greater than those obtained by the Moderates: the Roman Republic and Venice showed a very notable strength of resistance.¹⁰⁹ In the period after ’48 the relation between the two forces—the regular and the “charismatic”—became organised around Cavour and Garibaldi and produced the greatest results (although these results were later confiscated by Cavour).

This “personnel” aspect is related to that of the “levy”. It should be observed that the technical difficulty on which Mazzini’s initiatives always came to grief was precisely that of the “revolutionary levy”. It would be interesting, from this point of view, to study Ramorino’s attempt to invade Savoy, together with the attempts of the Bandiera brothers, Pisacane, etc.,¹¹⁰ and to compare them with the situation which faced Mazzini in ’48 at Milan and

¹⁰⁹ The Roman Republic under Garibaldi, and Venice under Manin, held out for several months against the Austrians in 1849 despite the demoralisation following the defeat of the Piedmontese at Novara.

¹¹⁰ Ramorino tried to invade Savoy in 1834; the Bandiera brothers landed in Calabria in 1844; Pisacane (see note 17 on p. 62) committed suicide after the failure of his landing at Sapri in 1857.

in '49 in Rome—situations which he did not have the capacity to organise.¹¹¹ These attempts of a few individuals could not fail to be nipped in the bud; it would have been a miracle indeed if the reactionary forces, concentrated and able to operate freely (i.e. unopposed by any broad movement of the population), had not crushed initiatives of the Ramorino, Pisacane, Bandiera type—even if these had been better prepared than in fact they were. In the second period (1859–60), the “revolutionary levy” (which is what Garibaldi’s Thousand in fact was) was made possible firstly by the fact that Garibaldi grafted himself on to the Piedmontese national forces, and secondly by the fact that the English fleet effectively protected the Marsala landing and the capture of Palermo, and neutralised the Bourbon fleet. In Milan after the Five Days and in republican Rome, Mazzini had opportunities to set up recruitment centres for an organic levy, but he had no intention of doing so. This was the source of his conflict with Garibaldi in Rome, and the reason for his ineffectiveness in Milan compared with Cattaneo and the Milanese democratic group.¹¹²

In any case, although the course of events in the Risorgimento revealed the enormous importance of the “demagogic” mass movement, with its leaders thrown up by chance, improvised, etc., it was nevertheless in actual fact taken over by the traditional organic forces—in other words, by the parties of long standing, with rationally-formed leaders, etc. And identical results occurred in all similar political events. (Examples of this are the preponderance of the Orleanists over the radical-democratic popular forces in France in 1830; and, ultimately, the French Revolution of 1789 too—in which Napoleon represents in the last analysis the triumph of the organic bourgeois forces over the Jacobin petit-bourgeois forces.)

¹¹¹ In 1848, after the successful “Five Days” insurrection in Milan and the Austrian withdrawal to their “quadrilateral” of fortified towns, Mazzini arrived in Milan and founded *Italia del Popolo*. With this organ, he attempted to combat the notion of a fusion of Piedmont and Lombardy, in favour of his own aim of a united, republican Italy. He failed to gain popular support for his views.

In 1849 (see note 90 on p. 102) Mazzini headed the Roman Republic. His policy of entrusting the city’s defences to the regular army rather than attempting to mobilise the entire population was symbolised by his appointment of Rosselli, a regular army general, rather than Garibaldi to command the defence forces.

¹¹² Carlo Cattaneo (1801–69), sometimes called the first Italian positivist, edited the influential *Il Politecnico*. During the Five Days of Milan (see previous note) he headed the Council of War; at this time he was favourable to the policy of the Piedmontese monarchy. However, he came to oppose the latter fiercely, feeling that the Italian bourgeois revolution was being sacrificed to Piedmontese ambitions. In 1867 he became a deputy in the Italian parliament, but refused to take the oath of loyalty to the throne of Savoy.

Similarly in the World War the victory of the old career officers over the reservists, etc. In any case, the absence among the radical-popular forces of any awareness of the role of the other side prevented them from being fully aware of their own role either; hence from weighing in the final balance of forces in proportion to their effective power of intervention; and hence from determining a more advanced result, on more progressive and modern lines.

Still in connection with the concept of "passive revolution" or "revolution/restoration" in the Italian Risorgimento, it should be noted that it is necessary to pose with great precision the problem which in certain historiographical tendencies is called that of the relations between the objective conditions and the subjective conditions of an historical event. It seems obvious that the so-called subjective conditions can never be missing when the objective conditions exist, in as much as the distinction involved is simply one of a didactic character. Consequently it is on the size and concentration of subjective forces that discussion can bear, and hence on the dialectical relation between conflicting subjective forces.

It is necessary to avoid posing the problem in "intellectualistic" rather than historico-political terms. Naturally it is not disputed that intellectual "clairvoyance" of the terms of the struggle is indispensable. But this clairvoyance is a political value only in as much as it becomes disseminated passion, and in as much as it is the premiss for a strong will. In many recent works on the Risorgimento, it has been "revealed" that there existed individuals who saw everything clearly (recall Piero Gobetti's emphasis on Ornato's¹¹³ significance). But these "revelations" are self-destroying, precisely because they are revelations; they demonstrate that what was involved was nothing more than personal reflections which today represent a form of "hindsight". In fact, they never effected a juncture with actual reality, never became a general and operative national-popular consciousness. Out of the Action Party and the Moderates, which represented the real "subjective forces" of the Risorgimento? Without a shadow of doubt it was the Moderates, precisely because they were also aware of the role of the Action Party: thanks to this awareness, their "subjectivity" was of a superior and more decisive quality. In Victor Emmanuel's crude, sergeant-major's expression "we've got the Action Party in our

¹¹³ Luigi Ornato (1787-1842), an obscure Piedmontese thinker, left no published work except a vulgarisation of Marcus Aurelius but enjoyed a high reputation, e.g. with Gioberti. Gobetti saluted him in the *Manifesto* for the first number of *La Rivoluzione Liberale* as the "philosopher of the risings of 1821", etc.

pocket" there is more historico-political sense than in all Mazzini. [1933]

FIRST EPILOGUE

The thesis of the "passive revolution" as an interpretation of the Risorgimento period, and of every epoch characterised by complex historical upheavals. Utility and dangers of this thesis. Danger of historical defeatism, i.e. of indifferentism, since the whole way of posing the question may induce a belief in some kind of fatalism, etc. Yet the conception remains a dialectical one—in other words, presupposes, indeed postulates as necessary, a vigorous antithesis which can present intransigently all its potentialities for development. Hence theory of the "passive revolution" not as a programme, as it was for the Italian liberals of the Risorgimento, but as a criterion of interpretation, in the absence of other active elements to a dominant extent. (Hence struggle against the political morphinism which exudes from Croce and from his historicism.) (It would seem that the theory of the passive revolution is a necessary critical corollary to the Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy*.) Revision of certain sectarian ideas on the theory of the party, theories which precisely represent a form of fatalism of a "divine right" type. Development of the concepts of mass party and small élite party, and mediation between the two. (Theoretical and practical mediation: is it theoretically possible for there to exist a group, relatively small but still of significant size, let us say several thousand strong, that is socially and ideologically homogeneous, without its very existence demonstrating a widespread state of affairs and corresponding state of mind which only mechanical, external and hence transitory causes prevent from being expressed?) [1933]

MATERIAL FOR A CRITICAL ESSAY ON CROCE'S TWO HISTORIES, OF ITALY AND OF EUROPE¹¹⁴

Historical relationship between the modern French state created by the Revolution and the other modern states of continental Europe. The comparison is vitally important—provided that it is not made on the basis of abstract sociological schemas. It should be based on the study of four elements: 1. revolutionary explosion in France

¹¹⁴ i.e. *Storia d'Italia dal 1871 al 1915*, and *Storia d'Europa nel secolo decimono.*

with radical and violent transformation of social and political relations; 2. European opposition to the French Revolution and to any extension of it along class lines; 3. war between France, under the Republic and Napoleon, and the rest of Europe—initially, in order to avoid being stifled at birth, and subsequently with the aim of establishing a permanent French hegemony tending towards the creation of a universal empire; 4. national revolts against French hegemony, and birth of the modern European states by successive small waves of reform rather than by revolutionary explosions like the original French one. The “successive waves” were made up of a combination of social struggles, interventions from above of the enlightened monarchy type, and national wars—with the two latter phenomena predominating. The period of the “Restoration” is the richest in developments of this kind; restoration becomes the first policy whereby social struggles find sufficiently elastic frameworks to allow the bourgeoisie to gain power without dramatic upheavals, without the French machinery of terror. The old feudal classes are demoted from their dominant position to a “governing” one, but are not eliminated, nor is there any attempt to liquidate them as an organic whole; instead of a class they become a “caste” with specific cultural and psychological characteristics, but no longer with predominant economic functions. Can this “model” for the creation of the modern states be repeated in other conditions? Can this be excluded absolutely, or could we say that at least partially there can be similar developments in the form of the appearance of planned economies?¹¹⁵ Can it be excluded for all states, or only for the large ones? The question is of the highest importance, because the France–Europe model has created a mentality which is no less significant for being “ashamed of itself” or for being an “instrument of government”. An important question related to the foregoing is that of the function which the intellectuals thought they fulfilled in this long, submerged process of political and social fragmentation of the restoration. Classical German philosophy was the philosophy of this period, and animated the liberal national movements from 1848 to 1870. Here too is the place to recall the Hegelian parallel (carried over into the philosophy of praxis) between French practice and German speculation.¹¹⁶ In reality the parallel can be extended: what is practice for the fundamental class becomes “rationality”

¹¹⁵ See “Americanism and Fordism” on pp. 277–318, which opens with a passage which makes clear what Gramsci means by “planned economies”. See too “The history of Europe seen as ‘passive revolution’” on pp. 118–20.

¹¹⁶ See note 46 on p. 78.

and speculation for its intellectuals (it is on the basis of these historical relations that all modern philosophical idealism is to be explained).

The conception of the State according to the productive function of the social classes cannot be applied mechanically to the interpretation of Italian and European history from the French revolution throughout the nineteenth century. Although it is certain that for the fundamental productive classes (capitalist bourgeoisie and modern proletariat) the State is only conceivable as the concrete form of a specific economic world, of a specific system of production, this does not mean that the relationship of means to end can be easily determined or takes the form of a simple schema, apparent at first sight. It is true that conquest of power and achievement of a new productive world are inseparable, and that propaganda for one of them is also propaganda for the other, and that in reality it is solely in this coincidence that the unity of the dominant class—at once economic and political—resides.

But the complex problem arises of the relation of internal forces in the country in question, of the relation of international forces, of the country's geo-political position. In reality, the drive towards revolutionary renewal may be initiated by the pressing needs of a given country, in given circumstances, and you get the revolutionary explosion in France, victorious internationally as well. But the drive for renewal may be caused by the combination of progressive forces which in themselves are scanty and inadequate (though with immense potential, since they represent their country's future) with an international situation favourable to their expansion and victory. Raffaele Ciasca's book on "The Origins of the National Programme", while it proved that there existed in Italy the same pressing problems as existed in *ancien régime* France, and a social force which interpreted and represented these problems precisely in the French sense, also proved that these forces were weak and the problems remained at the level of "petty politics".¹¹⁷ In any case, one can see how, when the impetus of progress is not tightly linked to a vast local economic development which is artificially limited and repressed, but is instead the reflection of international developments which transmit their ideological currents to the periphery—currents born on the basis of the productive development of the

¹¹⁷ Ciasca's book had been reviewed by Mondolfo in an article on interpretations of the Risorgimento written in 1917, which Gramsci had republished in part in *Il Grido del Popolo*, 16 May 1918. The social force referred to is clearly the PSI and the socialist forces in general.

more advanced countries—then the group which is the bearer of the new ideas is not the economic group but the intellectual stratum, and the conception of the State advocated by them changes aspect; it is conceived of as something in itself, as a rational absolute. The problem can be formulated as follows: since the State is the concrete form of a productive world and since the intellectuals are the social element from which the governing personnel is drawn, the intellectual who is not firmly anchored to a strong economic group will tend to present the State as an absolute; in this way the function of the intellectuals is itself conceived of as absolute and pre-eminent, and their historical existence and dignity are abstractly rationalised. This motive is fundamental for an historical understanding of modern philosophical idealism, and is connected with the mode of formation of the modern States of continental Europe as “reaction—national transcendence” of the French Revolution (a motive which is essential for understanding the concepts of “passive revolution” and “revolution/restoration”, and for grasping the importance of the Hegelian comparison between the principles of Jacobinism and classical German philosophy). The observation can be made that certain traditional criteria for historical and cultural evaluation of the Risorgimento period must be modified, and in some cases inverted: 1. the Italian currents which are “branded” for their French rationalism and abstract illuminism are perhaps those which in fact most closely adhere to Italian reality, in so far as in reality they conceive of the State as the concrete form of an Italian economic development in progress; a similar content requires a similar political form; 2. the real “Jacobins” (in the pejorative sense which the term has taken on for certain historiographical currents) are the currents which appear most indigenous in that they seem to develop an Italian tradition.¹¹⁸ But in reality this current is “Italian” only because culture for many centuries was the only Italian “national” manifestation; this is simply a verbal illusion. Where was the basis for this Italian culture? It was not in Italy; this “Italian” culture is the continuation of the mediaeval cosmopolitanism linked to the tradition of the Empire and the Church. Universal concepts with “geographical” seats in Italy. The Italian intellectuals were functionally a cosmo-

¹¹⁸ These currents are, on the surface of it, the republicans, Mazzinians, etc. (influenced by the ideas of the French Revolution) on the one hand, and the Moderates on the other. However, it is hard not to read into this an indirect comment on the contemporary socialist/communist Left and nationalist/fascist Right respectively. See too ‘The Political Party’, pp. 147–57.

politan cultural concentration; they absorbed and developed theoretically the reflections of the most solid and indigenous contemporary Italian life. This function can be seen in Machiavelli too, though Machiavelli attempted to turn it to national ends (without success and without any appreciable result). *The Prince*, in fact, was a development of Spanish, French and English experience during the travail of national unification—which in Italy did not command sufficient forces, or even arouse much interest. Since the representatives of the traditional current really wish to apply to Italy intellectual and rational schemas, worked out in Italy it is true, but on the basis of anachronistic experiences rather than immediate national needs, it is they who are the Jacobins in the pejorative sense . . . [1932]

THE HISTORY OF EUROPE SEEN AS "PASSIVE REVOLUTION"

Is it possible to write a history of Europe in the nineteenth century without an organic treatment of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars? And is it possible to write a history of Italy in modern times without the struggles of the Risorgimento? In both cases Croce, for extrinsic and tendentious reasons, excludes the moment of struggle in which the structure is formed and modified, and placidly takes as history the moment of cultural or ethical-political expansion. Does the conception of the "passive revolution" have a "present" significance? Are we in a period of "restoration-revolution" to be permanently consolidated, to be organised ideologically, to be exalted lyrically? Does Italy have the same relation *vis-à-vis* the USSR that the Germany (and Europe) of Kant and Hegel had *vis-à-vis* the France of Robespierre and Napoleon?

Paradigms of ethical-political history. The *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century* seems to be the work of ethical-political history destined to become the paradigm of Crocean historiography offered to European culture. However, his other studies must be taken into account too: *History of the Kingdom of Naples*; *History of Italy from 1871 to 1915*; *The Neapolitan Revolution of 1799*; and *History of the Baroque Era in Italy*. The most tendentious and revealing, however, are the *History of Europe* and the *History of Italy*. With respect to these two works, the questions at once arise: is it possible to write (conceive of) a history of Europe in the nineteenth century without an organic treatment of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars? And is it possible to write a history of Italy in modern times without a treatment of the struggles of the Risorgimento? In other

words: is it fortuitous, or is it for a tendentious motive, that Croce begins his narratives from 1815 and 1871? I.e. that he excludes the moment of struggle; the moment in which the conflicting forces are formed, are assembled and take up their positions; the moment in which one ethical-political system dissolves and another is formed by fire and by steel; the moment in which one system of social relations disintegrates and falls and another arises and asserts itself? Is it fortuitous or not that he placidly takes as history the moment of cultural or ethical-political expansion? One can say, therefore, that the book on the *History of Europe* is nothing but a fragment of history, the "passive" aspect of the great revolution which started in France in 1789 and which spilled over into the rest of Europe with the republican and Napoleonic armies—giving the old régimes a powerful shove, and resulting not in their immediate collapse as in France but in the "reformist" corrosion of them which lasted up to 1870.

The problem arises of whether this Crocean construction, in its tendentious nature, does not have a contemporary and immediate reference. Whether it does not aim to create an ideological movement corresponding to that of the period with which Croce is dealing, i.e. the period of restoration-revolution, in which the demands which in France found a Jacobin-Napoleonic expression were satisfied by small doses, legally, in a reformist manner—in such a way that it was possible to preserve the political and economic position of the old feudal classes, to avoid agrarian reform, and, especially, to avoid the popular masses going through a period of political experience such as occurred in France in the years of Jacobinism, in 1831, and in 1848. But, in present conditions, is it not precisely the fascist movement which in fact corresponds to the movement of moderate and conservative liberalism in the last century?

Perhaps it is not without significance that, in the first years of its development, fascism claimed a continuity with the tradition of the old "historic" Right. It might be one of the numerous paradoxical aspects of history (a ruse of nature, to put it in Vico's language) that Croce, with his own particular preoccupations, should in effect have contributed to a reinforcement of fascism—furnishing it indirectly with an intellectual justification, after having contributed to purging it of various secondary characteristics, of a superficially romantic type but nevertheless irritating to his classical serenity modelled on Goethe. The ideological hypothesis could be presented in the following terms: that there is a passive revolution

involved in the fact that—through the legislative intervention of the State, and by means of the corporative organisation—relatively far-reaching modifications are being introduced into the country's economic structure in order to accentuate the "plan of production" element; in other words, that socialisation and co-operation in the sphere of production are being increased, without however touching (or at least not going beyond the regulation and control of) individual and group appropriation of profit. In the concrete framework of Italian social relations, this could be the only solution whereby to develop the productive forces of industry under the direction of the traditional ruling classes, in competition with the more advanced industrial formations of countries which monopolise raw materials and have accumulated massive capital sums.

Whether or not such a schema could be put into practice, and to what extent, is only of relative importance. What is important from the political and ideological point of view is that it is capable of creating—and indeed does create—a period of expectation and hope, especially in certain Italian social groups such as the great mass of urban and rural petit bourgeois. It thus reinforces the hegemonic system and the forces of military and civil coercion at the disposal of the traditional ruling classes.

This ideology thus serves as an element of a "war of position" in the international economic field (free competition and free exchange here corresponding to the war of movement), just as "passive revolution" does in the political field. In Europe from 1789 to 1870 there was a (political) war of movement in the French Revolution and a long war of position from 1815 to 1870. In the present epoch, the war of movement took place politically from March 1917 to March 1921; this was followed by a war of position whose representative—both practical (for Italy) and ideological (for Europe)—is fascism. [1935]